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WELLS DUG OUT.

BY THE

DE WITT TALMAGE.

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# OLD WELLS DUG OUT:

BEING A THIRD SERIES OF FIFTY SERMONS

BY THE

REV. T. DE WITT TALMAGE, D.D.,

*Author of "The Abominations of Modern Society;" "Crumbs Swept Up;"  
"Around the Tea Table," &c., &c.*

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# SERMONS

BY

REV. T. DE WITT TALMAGE, D.D.

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## CHRIST LOOKING FOR THE SINNER.

"The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."—*Luke xix. 10.*

WHEN Kossuth visited the United States, about twenty years ago, so great was the enthusiasm for Hungary, that I remember very well the trees around the New York "Battery" were crowded with people who had climbed there to see the distinguished stranger as he passed. I shall never forget that scene. Indeed, if one be well poised, he cannot stand in a better place, to see a passing crowd, than in a tree-top. Well, Christ was coming to Jericho, and there was a small man, whose head did not come up to the shoulders of other people, who despaired of seeing the distinguished stranger while standing on the dead level; so he climbs up into a sycamore-tree—broad-branched, stretching its arms clear across the highway—and sits there while Jesus advances. Christ, coming up with a great multitude, casts His eye up, and sees this man on the branch of the sycamore, and says: "Come down;" and after the man has alighted, He says, among other things, to him: "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Our sympathies are always aroused when we see anything that is lost. Even a dog that has wandered away from its master we feel sorry for. Or a bird that has escaped from its owner, we say: "Poor thing." Going down the street near nightfall, in the teeth of the sharp north-east wind, you feel

very pitiful for one who has got to be out to-night. As you go along you hear the affrighted cry of a child. You stop. You say: "What is the matter?" You go up and find that a little one has lost its way from home. In its excitement it cannot even tell its name or its residence. The group of people gathered around are all touched, all sympathetic and helpful. A plain body comes up, and with her plaid she wraps the child, and says: "I'll take care of the poor bairn?" While in the same street, but a little way off, the crier goes through the city, ringing a bell, and uttering a voice that sounds dolefully through all the alleys and byways of the city: "A lost child! Three years of age, blue eyes, light hair. Lost child!" Did you ever hear any such pathos as that ringing through the darkness?

You are on shipboard. You see against the sky a vessel. It comes nearer. You hoist a flag. It makes no response. You say: "What is the matter with that vessel?" You put the sea-glass to your eye, and you find there is no one in the rigging—no one on the deck. "Ah," you say: "I guess that must be an abandoned ship." It comes on, falling over into the trough of the ocean. It floats every whither, tossed by the wild sea, and the crew say to the passengers, and the captain says to his mate:

"IT IS A LOST SHIP."

You are going down the street, and you see a man that you know very well. You once associated with him. You are astonished as you see him. "Why, you say, "he is all covered with the marks of sin. He must be in the very last stages of wickedness." And then you think of his blasted home, and say: "God pity his wife and child! God pity Him!" *A lost man!*

Under the gaslight, you see a painted thing flaunting down the street—once the joy of a village home—her laughter ring-

ing horror through the souls of the pure, and rousing up the merriment of those already ruined like herself. She has forgotten the home of her youth and the covenant of her God. *A lost woman!*

But, my friends, we are all lost. "All we, like sheep, have gone astray;" and the bellmen of heaven come out hunting up and down to find those who have missed their way, ringing through all the streets of the city, and all the valleys and mountains of the earth, the old Gospel bell. "The Son of man has come to seek and to save that which is lost."

I am glad that it is the Son of Man who has come to seek us. It is not one armed with thunderbolts, riding down the sky in ponderous chariot to crush us, but the Son of Man: His nature just like our nature, with one exception; His infancy rocked in the cradle of a mother's arms; His boyhood spent in Nazareth, amid a boy's temptations. Afterwards, with blistered hand, learning a trade. Afterwards, preaching, not with priest's gown, but in citizen's apparel; talking as brother talks with brother. Oh, He was the Son of Man! He walked like a man; He slept like a man; He ate like a man; He drank like a man; He wept like a man; He suffered like a man; He *was* a man! He knew what sin and temptation are by personal contact, for He lived in a most abandoned village; and He moved around amid fishing villages known in all ages for their vice; and in after years he preached in Jerusalem, a city which, though it had a temple, was worse than New York. And when Christ comes to-night, He comes not to a new world to make a discovery, but He comes to an old world where He once lived; to a race whose nerves, and muscles, and bones, and flesh were just like those which He inhabited. Like us, the cold chilled Him; like us, fire warmed Him; like us, betrayal exasperated Him. I warrant you, that in that hostile and rough society, He received many a kick, and bruise, and cuff that has never

been recorded. I am glad to know that He comes in the fresh memory of His sorrows on earth, and of those thrilling night scenes and day scenes of His earthly citizenship, "to seek and to save that which was lost."

In the first place, I remark that

#### WE ARE LOST TO HOLINESS.

Are you not all willing to take the Bible announcements that our nature is utterly ruined? Sin has broken in at every part of our castle. One would think that we got enough of it from our parents, whether they were pious or not; but we have taken the capital of sin with which our fathers and mothers started us, and we have by accumulation, as by infernal compound interest, made it enough to swamp us for ever. The heart a battle-ground, across which armed battalions sweep right and left. The ivory palace of the soul polluted with the filthy feet of all uncleanness. The Lord Jesus Christ comes to bring us back to holiness. He comes not to destroy us, but to take the consequence of our guilt. He breaks through lacerating thorns, and he dies to offer us cleanliness. Here is a man who, a few weeks ago, said: "All is right with me. I am not willing to confess I am a sinner." Now, the spirit comes to his soul, and he feels himself to be so great a sinner, that there is no mercy for him. When did he make the most accurate estimate? Now. "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." But says some one in the audience: "I have sinned so much I do not believe Christ will take me." Napoleon thought of going over into Italy. His friends laughed at him, and said: "You can never get over the Alps. If you know anything about the Alps, you know you can never get over there." Napoleon waved his hand, and said: "There shall be no Alps." Then the road was built through the Simplon pass—the wonder of following ages. We stand and see the

mountain of our guilt. The obstacles seem so great that it is impossible for us to find a way into the peace and life of the Gospel ; but Christ comes, and He waves His wounded hand, and cries : " There shall be no obstacles ! I will come over the mountain of thy sin and the hills of thine iniquity." Oh, ye who have sinned, instead of flying away from Christ, if you only knew who it is that comes to save you, you would fly no farther, but turn around ; and while Christ seeks you, you would seek Christ, and this house would be a scene of a penitent sinner and a pardoning Saviour, throwing each other's arms around each other's necks ; while heaven could afford to stop half-an-hour and hang over the battlements gazing. What is that flutter among the angels ? Who is that horseman rushing through the city with quick despatch ? What is that announcement on the bulletins of heaven ? I know what it is. Christ has *found* that which was lost.

" Nor angels can their joy contain,  
But kindle with new fire ;  
The sinner lost is found, they sing,  
And strike the sounding lyre."

I remark, again—

#### WE ARE LOST TO HAPPINESS,

and Christ comes to find us. A caliph said : " I have been fifty years a caliph, and I have had all honours, and all wealth ; and yet, in the fifty years, I can count up only fourteen days of happiness." How many there are in this audience that cannot count fourteen days in all their life in which they had no vexations or annoyances. We all feel a capacity for happiness that has never been tested. There are interludes of bliss ; but whose entire life has been a continuous satisfaction ? Why is it that the most of the fine poems of the world are somehow descriptive of grief ? It is because men know more about sorrow than they do about

joy. John Milton succeeds when he writes "*Paradise Lost*," but fails when he comes to write "*Paradise Regained*." Dante's "*Inferno*" is a chime of horrors. Bryant's "*Thaummatopsis*" is a poem of tears. Take the pathos out of the writings of Tennyson and Longfellow, and you have taken three-fourths their power. John Ruskin writes his most effective passages about the ruins of Venice. It is because men know more about sorrow than about joy that they are more effective in describing the former? The dog of bad news runs faster than the carrier pigeon flies with good tidings. There are flushes of satisfaction in the heart; but whose life has been a prolonged delight? The soul has four ranks of keys, and the world does not know how to play on such an elaborate instrument; but Religion comes, and with her right hand she touches the higher keys of the soul, and with her left hand the lower keys of the soul, and then sweeps them with the symphonies of heaven. Christ comes to find those who have been lost to happiness. He soothes them, He inspirits them, He lifts them, He opens the door of the lost Eden, and invites them to come in again to peace.

Oh, how many in this house have been goaded, and stung, and plagued! Had it not been for risking your eternal interests, some of you would have put an end to the scene of earthly suffering with your own hand. A deep undertone of sadness rolls through the soul. You would be willing now to give up your money, and your social position, and all you have achieved, for one day of the peace which the good old slave expressed when he said, with broken language: "In owning Christ I seem to own everything: The air is mine, for I can breathe it; the sunshine is mine, for I can sit in it; the earth is mine, for I can lie down in it." To have something of the complete satisfaction which belongs to the humblest of God's children, you would give almost

anything. Oh, ye who are struck through with unrest, Christ comes to-night to give you rest. If Christ comes to you, you will be independent of all worldly circumstances. It was so with the Christian man who suffered for His faith, and was thrust down into the coal-hole of the Bishop of London. He said: "We have had fine times here, singing gladsome songs all night long. Oh, God! forgive me for being so unworthy of this glory." So said the martyr in the coal-hole of the Bishop of London. More joyful in the hour of suffering and martyrdom was Rose Allen. When the persecutor put a candle underneath her wrist, and held it there until the sinews snapped, she said: "If you see fit, you can burn my feet next, and then also my head." Christ once having taken you into His custody and guardianship, you can laugh at pain, and persecution, and trial. Great peace for all those whom Christ has found, and who have found Christ. Jesus comes into their sick room. The nurse may have fallen asleep in the latter watches of the night, but Jesus watches with slumberless eyes, and He puts His gentle hand over the hot brow of the patient, and says: "You will not always be sick. I will not leave you. There is a land where the inhabitant never saith: 'I am sick.' Hush; troubled soul! Peace!"

This Jesus comes into the home of bereavement, and He says: "I took your lost darling. I come now to make up for his absence. I wanted him at the gate when you came through. The days of your separation will only add to the joys of re-union. Peace, I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

Just as sometimes a child is so sick that it cannot lie any longer in the cradle, and the mother has to take it up, so sometimes the Lord's children are so troubled that they cannot lie easy anywhere but in God's lap, while He bends over



them and sings this sweet song: "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you."

"The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,  
I will not, I will not, desert to His foes;  
That soul, though all hell should endeavour to shake,  
I'll never, no never, no never, forsake."

Again, I remark that

WE ARE LOST TO HEAVEN,

and Christ comes to take us there. I cannot imagine anything more distressful than, without having musical taste, to sit and listen to an oratorio for two hours and a half. Though it be the best of oratorios, if a man have no musical taste, it is a distress to him, while it is a joy to others. And I cannot imagine anything more distressful for a man who has no love for pictures, to be shut up in the Luxembourg gallery in Paris. Yes, I can think of one thing worse than that, and that will be for a man to enter heaven without any taste for it. I sometimes hear people talk as though all a man had to do was just to leave this world and go into heaven and sit down to its enjoyments. If a man cannot stand Christian society here for one day, how would he stand a million ages of it? I see an unregenerate soul entering heaven. It enters heaven, looks around, and sees God there, and angels there, and hears the cry: "Holy, holy;" and the unregenerate soul says: "This is no place for me," and he flies to the battlements, and he cries: "I can stand it here no longer," and he leaps off into outer darkness. In other words, the worst hell for a man would be heaven, if he has no qualifications—no preparations for it. But Christ comes to take the discord out of our soul and string it with a heavenly attuning. He comes to take out that from us which makes us unlike heaven, and substitute that which assimilates us. Ten thousand times the gate of heaven has

swung back and forth, but it never swings back and forth save as Christ opened it, and you will go in through Him or not at all. Christ wants you there. How do I know it? Suppose a man lost a diamond, and he looked for it eight or ten days, would you not conclude, from the fact that he looked for it so long, that he wanted the diamond? And when I find Christ seeking for your soul, seeking for it ever since it has been a soul, seeking for it by day and by night, seeking for it through heat and through cold, seeking for it with tears in His eyes and blood on His brow, and scourges on His back, and a world of agony in His heart, I know that it is because He wants to find you. Oh, He has prepared a glorious heaven for you! It is all ready. Not merely a throne, but steps by which to mount it. Not only a harp, but a song to play on it. Not only a bannered procession, but a victory which it is to celebrate. God wants no vacant chairs at that banquet. He does not want those who stand around Him in glory to wonder why *you* have not been solicited. He does not want the Book of life to thunder shout till your name is in it. What do I breathe? It is the fragrance of Him whose garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces. What do I hear? It is the footstep of Him who comes with worn sandal in the journey from Bethlehem to Nazareth, and from Nazareth to Jerusalem, and from Jerusalem to Golgotha, and from Golgotha to glory, and from glory here, seeking that which is lost. Oh, jostle Him not from thy door-step. Do not drive this Christ away, as though He were an unworthy beggar soliciting your alms. Hear His voice. Trust His sacrifices. Respond to His love. Take His heaven. Do you not know, oh man, oh woman, that you are the lost one spoken of in my text? "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." You may hide away from Him; but there are some things which will find you, whether Christ by His

grace finds you or not. Trouble will find you. Temptation will find you. Sickness will find you. Death will find you. The judgment will find you. Eternity will find you.

Soon you will be gone from all these scenes, and if a thousand men should come out with lanterns, and torches, and St. Bernard dogs used to hunting up missing travellers, and search for your soul, you could not be found by them. The grave will have your body. Your heirs will have your estate. Eternity will have your soul. In the flash of a second, your last opportunity for heaven may go out. Postpone this question of the soul, and you are postponing getting into the last life-boat that shall put out from the wreck for the beach ere the hulk lurch over and go down. God forbid that any of you should at the last have the dismay of the Scotch woman of whom I was reading a few days ago. One night, she could not sleep because of her soul's wandering from Christ. She got up and wrote in her diary: "One year from now, I will attend to the matters of my soul." She retired, but she could not sleep. So she arose again, and wrote a better promise in her diary. "One month from now, I will attend to the matters of my soul." She retired again but found no sleep, and arose again and wrote: "Next week, I will attend to the matters of my soul." Then she slept soundly. The next day she went into scenes of gaiety. The following day she was sick, and the middle of next week she died. Delirium lifted from her mind just long enough for her to say: "*I am a week too late. I am lost!*" Oh, to be a year too late, or a month too late, or an hour too late—aye, to be a second too late, is to be for ever too late. May God Almighty, by His grace, keep us from the wild, awful, crushing catastrophe of a ruined soul!

## THE GREAT INTERVIEW.

"Prepare to meet thy God."—*Amos* iv. 12.

THE Jews were incorrigible. God had tried for their correction, captivity, famine, too much rain, too little rain, universal sickness, lightning, and war. No good result. He now tells them that greater judgments are to come, and breaks in upon them like a cavalry charge with the words: "Prepare to meet thy God."

We go out in the spring-time and we meet God amid the apple blossoms. We go in August, and in the full leafage, we meet God in the forest. We go out in the wintry blast, and we meet God in the snowbanks. The rainbow, the morning cloud, the "northern lights," the jewelled midnight, only His different changes of apparel flung over His shoulders, or girdled about His loins, or set upon His brow as a garland. It is the same God that wraps Himself in the cyclone and walks the sea, or in the simoon and walks the desert, or stamps His foot in the South American earthquake, or smites with the red fist of the lightning. I can get no idea of what God is from the natural world. "God is love," smiles the sunshine. "God is wrath," cries the Caribbean whirlwind as it cracks off the masts of the shipping. So that I turn away from the earth and I turn to the Bible, and I ask: "Who is He?" Eternal—a myriad of ages no more to Him than a heartbeat. Omnipotent—the universe dropping in one word from His tongue. Omniscient—His eye taking in immensity at a glance. Holy—thundering away the least taint. Loving—inviting the whole world to His heart. A circle of attributes, sweeping around thrones, and coronations, and blandishments—glories that never fade and sorrows that never go out. All the glittering worlds of to-night only the dust of His chariot-wheels. The pomp of heaven marching under his footstool. The only wise, the

only pure, the only good, the only holy, the only great ! *God ! God !*

My text says that that Being we have to meet. There are some persons we never meet. Thousands of miles divide us. We never will meet them in house, or store, or street ; but God, the text says, we *must* meet.

I remark first : we must

#### MEET GOD IN THE MISFORTUNES OF LIFE.

Is there a man here, who has come to mid-life, that has never been buffeted ? The path of life has sharp thorns, and deep plunges, and steep ascents, and overwhelming surprises. You must meet God in times of sickness. You will be going along, keeping up day after day, until, after awhile, you will surrender. You will be flat down. Business stopped at a time when you cannot afford to have it stop. Sleeplessness. Almost interminable nights. Forebodings, watchings. Wondering when it is going to end. Scrutinizing the doctor's face to see what are the prospects of recovery or dissolution. An unnatural silence about the house because feet are slippered and the voices hushed. A glimpse of eternity through the turned lattice of the sick room. Whom will you meet there ? The doctor, the nurse, inquiring friends, you will meet there ; but One other. By your hot pillow in that solemn silence, amid those great uncertainties, you will meet God ! He will talk to you and ask you what you did in days of health, what are your preparations for eternity, and what would happen if now your pulse should stop and your lungs should cease their respiration ? Oh, it is a solemn hour when an impenitent man—flat down, helpless, not able to lift a finger—has all the past rushing upon him. Flannels no longer able to keep the feet warm because they seem dipped in the cold stream that bounds this life ; and over that pillow, God bending—an offended God, an unre-

conciled God, an omnipotent God! I think the brightest places I have ever seen have been the sick rooms of God's dear children. They seemed ready for anything, and the Lord was there beautifully and gloriously to comfort them. But I have looked off upon a desert and seen sand and desolation. No flower. No leaf. No brook. I have seen dark midnights, when riding along my horse would have gone over the precipice but for the flash of the lightning that revealed it. And yet, I am to tell you that the darkest midnight I ever saw is the midnight desert of a sick room in which an impenitent soul meets God.

Again I remark: we will have to meet God in *the bereavements of life*. We cannot escape them unless a man stands all alone—fatherless, motherless, brotherless, sisterless, childless. But there are lines of affection and influence reaching out all around, and our common sense tells us that there must be last words; last looks; last pressures of the hand; arms folded in the final sleep; feet stopped at the end of the journey; faces, once cheerful and bright with emotion, white, and still, and pinched; shadows of sorrow over earth and sky; the chair, the table, the floor, the ceiling, everything about the house seeming to whisper “dead! dead!” Oh, when the hour of bereavement comes to us, will we stand in such relation to God that we will get comfort? I have seen a man in such an hour grind his teeth, and clench his fist, and ask God in indignation what He meant by doing that. I have seen a Christian man kiss the rod and say: “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.” But it is not always so. I have seen a man stand over a dead body and defy God, and tell Him to come on and do His worst! I shall never forget a scene in a former parish. A husband had lost his life in a distant city. In the midnight the lifeless body was to arrive. Oh, what a home of grief. I tried to pray. My

voice was drowned. The bereft would not listen. I told them Christ was a sympathizing Saviour. She did not believe it. I said: "God is a Father." She said: "No, He is a tyrant." Oh, may God forbid that I should ever come for the purposes of sympathy and consolation to a house of bereavement where the soul is rebellious against the Lord. There is not any comfort. Christian men cannot invent any comfort. There is no recipe of the Gospel adapted to the case where the man will not take the medicine and will not believe the promises. Amid the misfortunes and the upturnings of life we must meet God.

Again, I remark: an interview of this kind will take place

#### IN OUR LAST HOUR.

We do not want any Bible or argument to prove that we have to quit this scene after awhile. There may be worldly alleviations in the last hour. A man may have accumulated property, or have a generous life insurance, and he may be able to say to those whom he is leaving behind: "Keep things just as they are. Send the boy to college as though I had lived. There will be dividends large enough to meet all expenses." That is very well for those whom you leave behind; but one moment after you have quitted life, where will *your* residence be? We may, by keeping clear of ministers and churches, keep God out of our thoughts; but now, I will suppose that your last hour has come. Word goes over to the store that you will not be there to-morrow. Some one else will have to open and read the letters and answer them. Some one else will have to make purchases and fix the prices. You will not be there to-morrow, nor all this week, nor all this month, nor all this year, nor all this century. You will never be there again. I am supposing that your last hour has come. Leaving this life, suppose you have made no preparations? The ship is sinking, and no

life preserver. The darkness is coming on, and no torch. Everything going out of your grasp—bond and mortgages going—everything going, swimming away from the eye, swimming away from the ear, swimming away from the touch. That is one side—everything going. On the other side, what is coming? No inheritance coming. No bright angels coming. No heaven coming. God there, meeting the unpardoned soul. The immortal soul is starting! Stand back now, and let it swing off! It flies! Away! Away! No open window to receive it. No outspread arms of Jesus to welcome it. He dies without repentance, and goes to a world without hope.

I bless God that there are many who, in their last hours, have found joy and peace. So it was with Lady Huntingdon. As she went out of this life, she said: "I will go to my Father to-night." So it was with Alice Lucey. In her last moments she said: "My God, I come flying to Thee." So it was with John Pawson, as he closed his eyes in death, and said: "*Precious Jesus.*" So it was with John Bradford, who cried out: "If there is such a thing as going to heaven on horseback, this is it." But, alas, for some who, in that hour, have gone away broken down into darkness. So it was with the French athlete, able to wrestle down every gymnast, but in his last moment crying out: "Oh death, if thou wert a man, how soon I would throw thee." So it was with Voltaire, who said he would give the doctor half his fortune if he could only have another six months of life. So it was with Altamont in his closing moments, when he looked up and said: "Oh thou blasphemed, but most indulgent Lord God, hell itself is a refuge if it hide me from Thy frown."

I remark, again: we *must meet God in the great day*. Some say there will be no judgment-day; but how do you explain things? Here is one of the best men in destitution; here is one of the worst of men in great affluence, faring sumptu-



ously every day. Do you not think there is to be a time when these wrongs are to be righted, and these mysterious things are to be explained? I think so. Common sense teaches us

THERE MUST BE A JUDGMENT-DAY.

The mogul of Turkey used to be weighed once a year. On the opposite side of the scales first was put silver, then gold, then jewels, and then the gold and the jewels were thrown among the people. My friends, the day comes when you and I must be weighed in scales of a different character—weighed not against the gold and the jewels of this world; but weighed by the law of the eternal right and the eternal wrong.

Astronomers tell us that this world is going to freeze to death. They say that the sun is losing at the rate of one degree of heat in 35,000 years, and after awhile the stove of the sun will go out, and our world will roll around one great orb of ice. I do not believe it. I believe in the Bible notion that the earth, and all the things that are therein, shall be burned up. It will not be ice. It will be fire.

Painters have tried to sketch that day, but always fail. It is easy to sketch a city on fire, but not a universal conflagration. It is easy to sketch an earthquake that destroys a town, but not that which destroys the hemispheres. All the mountains falling. All the seas boiling. All the stars dropping. All the heavens rolling. All the earth vanishing. Angels flying. Graves bursting. Dead rising. Thrones hoisting. God coming. The Apostle Peter speaks of that day as "a great noise." The slide of an avalanche deafens the ear; but what will it be when the Himalayas, and Alps, and Mount Washington tumble into the dust. A thunder-storm reaches only five, ten, or fifteen miles; but what will it be when all around the earth the artillery of God shall be unlimbered; the whoop of the wind; the blare of the

trumpets ; the chorus of the saved ; the groans of the banished ; the cry of wild beasts frightened from their lair, not knowing which way to jump ; the clangor and the vociferation, and the echo and re-echo of earth, and heaven, and hell—these will be the great noise the apostle speaks of.

I do not know in what place of the earth the congregation will assemble for that great assize. Three or four summers ago I thought I saw a place fit to be the great judgment-hall of the last day. We had been riding through Tête Noire pass, Switzerland, through rocky desolation, until, at last, we came upon a scene which I never expected to witness until I beheld the last day. I said to my companion : “ This looks to me as if it might be the judgment-hall for the last day.” In this valley there is room for nations—a great amphitheatre. On these ledges of rocks, gallery upon gallery—first, second, third, forth, tenth gallery of rocks—room for angels, cherubim, seraphim, archangel. That sunlighted cliff, the point from which the righteous shall rise. That midnight cavern, the place from which the wicked shall depart. While, amid all that surrounding upheaval of rock and forest, a vast boulder, cushioned with moss, rose higher and higher, until we were overwhelmed with the height and the majesty of the spectacle, and I thought that might be the throne on which the Judge is to sit. And then there came rolling through my mind the words of Bishop Heber :

“ The Lord shall come ! the earth shall quake !  
The mountains to their centre shake !  
And, withering from the vault of night,  
The stars withdraw their feeble light.

“ While sinners in despair shall call,  
‘ Rocks, hide us ! mountains, on us fall ! ’  
The saints ascending from the tomb,  
Shall sing for joy, ‘ The Lord has come ! ’ ”

But I do not pretend to tell you where the judgment-hall

of the last day will be ; but there will be a place of judgment where we will have to meet God and answer for this night ; I for what I say, you for what you hear ; answer for all the opportunities we have had or might have had ; answer for all resistances of the Holy Ghost ; answer for all sick-bed vows broken ; all death-bed warnings slighted ; all Sabbaths, and Bibles, and communion-tables despised. For every year we will have to give answer ; every month, every hour, every moment of our life we will have to give answer ; and it will be under the scrutiny of that God who has seen us, and watched us, and knows all about us. Will we be ready for such a scrutiny under the eye of the all-seeing God ? If you are not, do not the words of my text come through your soul to-night, as though the ten thousand voices of death, and judgment, and eternity spoke at once, crying : " Prepare to meet thy God ! "

You say that all this is true, but how are we to prepare ? Two words will tell you : *Repent ! Believe !* That is, give up your sin, and be sorry for it. Take Christ for your Saviour. Hold on to Him. There have been a great many inventions by which we can travel in different directions ; but there has been no new invention for getting to heaven. One road, one door, one salvation, and that is Jesus Christ, the Lord ; and if you shall, this moment, by faith, take hold of Him, and say : " Oh, Lord Jesus, I have heard that Thou didst die for sinners ; I am a sinner, and plead for thy mercy ; " if you can in earnestness and faith say that, then you are prepared to meet God in sickness, and trouble, and death, and in judgment, and through all eternity.

That must have been an exciting scene when Florence Nightingale came into the Crimean war, and with her own hand administered to ten thousand wounded men lying along the banks of the Bosphorus. It is said that when she came with the lint, and the bandages, and the cordials, the tears

started down the cheeks of the men, and with the stump of the arm that had been amputated they waved, and huzzaed, and blessed her as she passed; and that the dying dream of many a soldier was filled with prayer for this angel of mercy, in the form of Florence Nightingale. But, my hearers, over thy sick and dying soul, to-night, a fairer one bends. It is the Angel of the Covenant—Jesus—the life for all the dead.

CAN YOU NOT LOVE HIM?

A mother was telling her little child about Christ, and that He had no place to lay His head. The child said: "Oh! ma, I wish I had been there. I would have given Him my pillow." Are you not ready to take this Christ, and let Him put down His weary head on the pillow of thy warmest affections? If so, then come time or eternity; come health or sickness; come prosperity or adversity—all is well. No terror. No darkness. Great peace for those who put their trust in God; but until you have attended to that, hear the cannonade of my text: "Prepare to meet thy God!" Defy no longer the Lord that bought. Rush not upon the thick bosses of His buckler. "Consider this now, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces and there be none to deliver."

A friend of mine had a little child dying, a few weeks ago, and he said that the little one, in the last hours, was very happy. He knelt down by her, and said: "My dear, shall I pray for you?" She replied: "Yes, yes." He said: "What shall I pray for?" "Well," she said, "you might pray that I might get my breath easier." And then the father took the child's hand and prayed, and when he was through the prayer, she said: "Papa! it seems as you hold one of my hands, Jesus holds the other." And I have thought, to-night, that while I take one of your hands in earnest imploration for your eternal salvation, Jesus might take your other hand, and say: "O, weary, wandering, troubled sinning soul, I will give thee rest."

## CROOKED PLOUGHING.

"No man having put his hand to the plough and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."—*Luke ix. 62.*

CHRIST'S illustrations were drawn from every-day life, We hardly ever find Him making any allusion to Grecian or Egyptian antiquities. You always immediately know what He means. We who speak in prayer-meetings, and Sabbath-schools, and pulpits, might learn many a practical lesson from Him in that respect. It is often the case that the illustration is so elaborate and learned, that the audience find harder work in understanding the illustration than the subject which we propose to illustrate. But it was not so with Christ. His comparisons were as plain as that white is white and black is black; and the most illiterate man that ever heard Jesus talk knew immediately what he meant.

Well, Christ was gathering up His friends and associates. He wanted to test their earnestness by demanding instantaneous discipleship. He wanted them immediately to become His followers, or not at all. There was a man standing there who said that he really intended to become one of Christ's disciples, but he wanted to go home first and say good-bye to his friends, and make arrangements before he undertook the Christian service. Christ would not consent to that. He knew very well that if that man went back, his family would persuade him to stay, and he would never enter into the discipleship; and, therefore, Christ expresses His dissent to the proposition of the man in the words of my text: "No man having put his hand to the plough and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

Many of us were brought up in the country, and we learned how to plough. It seems a very easy process to a man who has never tried, as he stands looking over the fence and sees the plough glide smoothly through the field.

One would think all you have to do, would be to take hold of the handles and put the point of the colter in the sod, and then tell the horses to start ; but to send the plough through at equal depth of earth, and, without being stopped by stone or stump, make a clear, straight furrow from one end to the other, requires a good deal of care. Many a one has lost his patience in the process. and when he first began to plough, has been knocked flat by the plough handles. Here is a boy that attempts to plough, but instead of keeping his eye on the beam of the plough or on the horses that are dragging the plough, he is looking this way and that, sometimes looking back to the end of the field from which he started. The husbandman comes down in the field and says : "My boy, you will never make a ploughman in that way. You must keep your eye on your work, or I shall discharge you, and put some one else in your place. See here, what a crooked furrow you have been making." Now, it is this illustration that Christ presents in order to show up the folly of that man who, once having started toward heaven, is averted this way and that, often looking back to the place from which he started. "No man having put his hand to the plough and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

I stand before many who have been roused to religious consideration, and some of them passed on into the life of the Gospel, and we have nothing for them this morning but congratulation and good cheer. Others have not got so far as that. They heard it thunder, they were awakened from their lethargy, their prayerless lips began to move in petition. From being inattentive hearers, you could see they were affected with a very deep anxiety. They asked the question of the gaoler. Tripped up by the misfortunes of life, they felt the need of something better than earthly solace. Under the uplifted battle-axe of disaster, they felt

they must have a helmet. They were importunate for a while. Ministering spirits, who watched the state of the soul, were ready to strike exultation over their return. They had started. They had their hands on the plough. The barren soil of the heart began to upturn in preparation for a glorious harvest. But mid-furrow, the plough stopped. They looked back, and showed they were not fit for the kingdom of God. They halted, some of them never again to start—others to be persuaded by the Spirit of God, through this morning's sermon, to resume their duty.

I remark, that many surrender their religious impressions because, like this man in the text, they *do not want to give up their friends and connections*. The probability is that the majority of your friends are unchristian. You do not want to turn your back upon them. You do not, by your action, want seemingly to condemn their behaviour: and so the wife waits for the husband to come to Christ, and so the husband waits for the wife to come to Christ, and they neither come. One in life! One in death! One in the loss of the soul! And so there are children who do not come because parents do not come. They say: "If religion were really anything particular, father would attend to it. If religion were anything very important, I am sure my mother would attend to it. They stay out of the kingdom and I will stay." Ah, it was not so with the serving-maid in the house of Naaman the leper. Amid all the grand surroundings that were hostile to religion, she maintained her faith in God, and through her instrumentality her master was cured of the leprosy. But I need not go to history to find instances where men have maintained the faith of the Gospel notwithstanding the most bitter hostilities. Go to that cabinet warehouse, go to that machine shop, go to that dry-goods store, and you will find men faithful to Christ, while all around is jeering and caricature. But there are some who

cannot serve God alone. They resolve to start heavenward ; but one good round of laughing scorn at the supper-table ends all their religious impressions. They want to get to heaven ; but they cannot endure the domestic opposition, the social opposition. They put their hand to the plough, and say : " Witness, ye men and angels, this day I take Christ, and start for heaven ;" but to-morrow they look back. Down at the club-house one day, they say : " Where is Mr. So-and-so ? I have not seen him here for four or five weeks." " Oh," says some one, " he is attending religious meetings." After awhile, the new convert goes amid those old associates, and when they see him coming, they say : " Oh, here comes our Christian. How solemn he looks. Mighty good he has got to be, hasn't he ? Come, now, you're a Christian they tell me ; just get down here and pray for us, and whistle one of your old church tunes. What ! ashamed to do it ? I thought you were a hypocrite. You like sin just as well as you ever did." Oh, to stand that bombardment, to be thrown out of old companionship, to be tabooed, and caricatured, and pointed at, is like cutting off the right arm, or plucking out the right eye, and you cannot stand it. Triumph over those influences : many have. Go down under them : many do.

Again, I remark : that sometimes people surrender their religious impressions because *they want to take one more look at sin*. They resolved that they would give up sinful indulgence, but they have been hankering for them ever since, thirsty for them, and finally they conclude to go into them. So there is a man who, under the influence of the Spirit, resolved he would become a Christian, and as a preliminary step he ceases profanity. That was the temptation and the sin of his life. After awhile, he says : " I don't know as it's worth while for me to be curbing my temper at all times—to be so particular about my speech. Some of the most dis-



tinguished men in the world have been profane. Benjamin Wade swears, Stephen A. Douglass used to swear, General Jackson swore at the battle of New Orleans, and if men like that swear, I can; and I am not responsible anyhow for what I do when I get provoked." And so the man who, resolving on heaven, quits his profanity, goes back to it. In other words, as the Bible describes it, "the dog returns to its vomit again, and the sow that is washed to her wallowing in the mire."

"But," says a man: "I will for Christ give up sharp practices in business. I once was fraudulent; I will cease to be fraudulent, even respectably fraudulent." But the time passes on, and one day he wakes up and says: "I find that men in my branch of business overreach. I don't know why I should be blamed if sometimes I should overreach. Besides that it is impossible to be severely honest in this day, and a man must make a living. Religion may do very well for the church, but it don't work in the store." So the man goes back to his old sharp practices in business, forgetful of the Bible warning: "As a partridge sitteth on eggs and hatcheth them not, so riches got by fraud; a man shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at the end he shall be a fool." O, my friends, there are ten thousand witcheries, which, after a man has started for heaven, compel him to look back.

I remark, again: there are many who surrender their religious impressions because *they want ease from spiritual anxiety*. They have been talking about their immortal soul, they have been wondering about the day of judgment, they have been troubling themselves about a great many questions in regard to religion, and they do not find peace immediately, and they say: "Here, I'll give it all up. I will not be bothered any more;" and so they get rest; but it is the rest of the drowning man who, after half-an-hour battling

with the waves, says: "There's no use; I can't swim ashore; I'll drown;" and he goes down. Oh, we do not hide the fact that to become a Christian demands the gathering up of all the energies of the soul. We do not deny the fact that there may be strong cryings out and tears, that there may be sleepless nights, that there may be loss of appetite until food shall become loathsome; but who are we that, having fought God for twenty or thirty years, should become spiteful and rebellious because in one day or hour, or in one week or month, we do not find pardon? I have known men who, after forty or fifty years contending against God, warring with all the concentrated passions and powers of their nature against the Lord Almighty, indignant because at the first prayer they did not get the mercy. Alas! alas! if after a few tears and a few struggles we surrender our religious impressions, and in a matter about which we can afford to make no mistake, we look back.

I see there are many souls here, to-day, all surrounded by temptations that would keep them away from God and heaven—temptations to the right, temptations to the left, temptations behind them, temptations before them—and I tell you now, that your only deliverance is in the strength of the Lord God Almighty, to trample them down and go on getting the victory through the Lord Jesus Christ. Alas! if you surrender and are cut to pieces by the bombardment from all sides, your only way out is forward, into the liberty and light of the Gospel. Alas! if now you look back.

I have to remark that the vast majority of those who once saw their duty, and started heavenward, but have looked back, never start again. There is nothing short of the thunders of the last day that will rouse them, and that will be too late. I think out of every hundred cases there are not more than one or two that ever start heavenward again.

I do not know that there is more than one out of a thousand. Having started and stopped, they stop for ever, so far as religious impressions are concerned. Misfortunes come—no Divine alleviation for them. Sickness comes—no Divine physician for them. Death comes—no Divine warmth to take off the chill, or heavenly lamp to illumine the darkness. They die, crying: “No hope!” and plunging down into bottomless depth, the winds whistle it: “No hope!” and destroyed spirits re-echo it: “No hope!” and everlasting ages hand it on to everlasting ages;—but there is no hope. They started, they stopped, they looked back, and that ended their opportunities for salvation. But, as I have just now remarked, there are exceptions to the rule, and I preach this morning to those exceptions. I want to tell those who have begun to seek after God, but have surrendered their religious impressions, of a Saviour’s compassion and the bleeding cross of a dying Jesus:

“Sinful soul, what hast thou done?  
Crucified the eternal Son.”

Oh, how could you look back? Did you not know it was at fearful hazard? that the death angel might smite you? that the door might shut? that the spirit might fly away and leave you undone and desolate? Oh, what a mercy that God spared you; that when you looked back God did not look back; that when you stopped praying, God did not stop beseeching; that the blood of the atonement, upon which you put your ungrateful foot, did not cry out in vengeance against your soul! I look upon you with amazement. I thrill with horror at the risk you ran. I feel as if to-day I must with unwonted earnestness lay hold that soul, lest the mandate from the throne go forth: “Cut him down! why cumbereth he the ground?” Oh, God, spare him another hour. Hold back the decree. Knock once more at the iron gate of his soul. Fly, messenger of salvation and

make quick work ere it be too late. But why should I, my brother, plead with you about your duty when you know it better than I can tell you? Ministers of religion may get some novelty of expression and some originality of illustration; but, after all, we feel that we are announcing the same old truths that have been ringing through the Church of Christ for ages. Indeed, we dare preach no other doctrine, for the apostle says: "If any one, though he be an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel, let him be accursed." Yes, my friends, you know all this story. You will not in the last great day be able to plead ignorance. You know if you die out of Christ, you die for ever. You know that the days of your probation on earth are so uncertain that nothing can be more uncertain. You know that in proportion as the soul's opportunities for salvation have been numerous and elevated, its last account will be stupendous. You know that beyond the margin of this life there is another life—a glorious heaven or an awful hell, and that towards one of those destinies you are speeding swifter than the lightning! You know all that. You know it so well that you can never say you did not know it. Could you blame God if He should cease importuning? Could you blame the Holy Ghost if He should be gone? Could you blame the Lord Jesus Christ if He should say: "I have done. I plead with that man. He has rejected me. Now I will reject Him." What plea, what excuse could you make at the last day? Could you say: "I never had any chance?" Why, the open books of judgment would show you the record of Sabbaths—sermons—ten thousand religious advantages. Would you say: "I never was warned?" The story would be told on that day that you were often impressed with the uncertainty of life; men falling on either side of you; accidents crashing into eternity some you knew right well, and whom you knew were not ready to go. Would you say on

that day: "I could not convert myself"? God would reply: "I was ready at your call, by my omnipotent spirit, to convert you." Ah, no, my brother, on that day, if you neglect what I tell you this morning, you will be speechless. The voice of your conscience affirming the stern decrees of God, it will need no sentence from the throne—you will utter your own sentence. It will need no implement of torture—your conscience will be the inquisition. God will not push you off, you will jump off. No apology to make. No possible escape. Then and there you will see the awful mistake you made in this world—having put your hand to the Gospel plough, in an evil hour, tempted of the devil and allured by a sinful world, you looked back. If you should sell a thousand dollars' worth of goods and get for them a worthless note, if you should go into a speculation and your partner in the speculation should go off with all the funds, you would not be so thoroughly cheated as you have been ten thousand times cheated about your soul; and Satan, encouraged by the fact that he has robbed you successfully so often, attempts now to swindle you out of heaven. There are some of you to whom God has given very large faculties for usefulness. If you had come into the kingdom of God, you might have made the Church of Christ rejoice long ago, and what vast usefulness you might have accomplished with the mental furniture which God gave you. And yet, I think, that you are ready to admit this morning, that so far as your own soul is concerned, and so far as the welfare of others is concerned, your life has been a failure, and the only question is now, whether the few remaining years of your life shall go in the same direction. Oh, if at last, you have a deliberate going out of this world; if lying down to die, you know you are going to die, and you have an opportunity of looking back upon your life, I am afraid that your pillow will be very hard and thorny. That must be a mighty Catholicon which can soothe the

anguish of a man looking back upon a wasted life. Amid the chief sorrows of that day to you will be the consideration that you once were almost disenthralled from sin, that once you did quite make up your mind to seek after God, and did really start heavenward, and put your hands on the plough—but lacking in persistence of purpose, and wrongly estimating the hazards you ran, and deceived by the fatal spirit of procrastination, you looked back.

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### THE PILE OF STONES SPEAKING.

“What mean ye by these stones?”—*Joshua* iv. 6.

YOU are wiser than most people if you have not mixed in your mind the passage of the Red Sea and the passage of the Jordan. The scenery is different, and the lessons to be learned from them are different. The Jordan, like the Mississippi, has bluffs on the one side and flats on the other. Here and there a sycamore shadows it. Here and there a willow dips into it. In the months of April and May the snows on Mount Lebanon thaw and flow down into the valley, and then Jordan overflows its banks. Then it is wide, deep, raging, and impetuous. At this season of the year I hear the tramp of forty thousand armed men coming down to cross the river. You say, why do they not go up nearer the rise of the river at the old camel ford? Ah! my friends, it is because it is not safe to go around when the Lord tells us to go ahead. The Israelites had been going around forty years, and they had enough of it. I do not know how it is with you, my brethren, but I have always got into trouble when I went around, but always got into safety when I went ahead.

There spreads out the Jordan, a raging torrent, much of

it snow-water just come down from the mountain-top; and I see some of the Israelites shivering at the idea of plunging in, and one soldier says to his comrade, "Joseph, can you swim?" And another says: "If we get across this stream we will get there with wet clothes and with damaged armour, and the Canaanites will slash us to pieces with their swords before we get up the other bank." But it is no time to halt.

#### THE GREAT HOST MARCHES ON.

The priests carrying the ark go ahead, the people follow. I hear the tramp of the great multitude. The priests have now come within a stone's throw of the water. Yet still there is no abatement of the flood. Now they have come within four or five feet of the stream; but there is no abatement of the flood. Bad prospect! It seems as if these Israelites that crossed the desert are now going to be drowned in sight of Canaan. But "Forward!" is the cry. The command rings all along the line of the host. "Forward!" Now the priests have come within one step of the river. This time they lift their feet from the solid ground, and put them down into the raging stream. No sooner are their feet there than Jordan flies. On the right hand God piles up a great mountain of floods; on the left, the water flows off toward the sea. The great river, for hours, halts and rears. The back waters, not being able to flow over the passing Israelites, pile wave on wave, until perhaps a sea-bird would find some difficulty in scaling the water cliff. Now the priests and all the people have gone over on dry land. The water on the left hand side by this time has reached the sea; and now that the miraculous passage has been made, stand back and see this stupendous pile of waters leap. God takes his hand from that wall of floods, and like a hundred cataracts they plunge and roar in thunderous triumph to the sea.

How are they to celebrate this passage? Shall it be with music? I suppose the trumpets and cymbals were all worn out before this. Shall it be with banners waving? Oh! no; they are all faded and torn. Joshua cries out: "I will tell you how to celebrate this: build a monument here to commemorate the event;" and every priest puts a heavy stone on his shoulder, and marches out and drops that stone in the Divinely-appointed place. I see the pile growing in height, in breadth, in significance; and, in after years, men went by that spot and saw this monument, and cried out one to another, in fulfilment of the prophecy of the text: "What mean ye by these stones?"

Blessed be God, he did not leave our church—I mean this particular church—down in the wilderness! We wandered about for a while, and some people said we had better take this route; and others, that route. Some said we had better go back, and some said there were sons of Anak in the way that would eat us up; and before the smoke had cleared away from the sky after our Tabernacle had been consumed, people stood on the very site of the place and said: "This church will never again be built." Our enemies laughed among themselves and said: "Aha, aha!" Meanwhile the rubbish was being cleared away, the foundation was being laid, and the pillars were being lifted; and, instead of the temporary structure in which we worshipped, we have this building, in which we hope the people of God will worship Him for hundreds and hundreds of years. We came down to the bank of the Jordan; we looked off upon the waters. Some of the sympathy that was expressed turned out to be snow-water melted from the top of Lebanon. Some said: "You had better not go in; you will get your feet wet." But we waded in, pastor and people, further and further, and in some way, the Lord only knows how, we got through; and to-night I go all around about this great house, erected



by your prayers, and sympathies, and sacrifices, and cry out in the words of my text:

“WHAT MEAN YE BY THESE STONES?”

It is an outrage to build a house like this, occupying so much room in a crowded thoroughfare, and with such vast toil and outlay, unless there be some tremendous reasons for doing it; and so, my friends, I pursue you to-night with the question of my text, and I demand of these trustees, and of these elders, and of all who have assisted in the building of this structure:

“What mean ye by these stones.”

In the first place, we mean that they shall be *an earthly residence for Christ*. Dear Jesus! He did not have much of a home when He was here. Who and where is that child crying? It is Jesus, born in an out-house. Where is that hard breathing? It is Jesus, asleep on a rock. Who is that in the back part of the fishing-smack, with a sailor's rough overcoat thrown over Him? It is Jesus, the worn-out voyager. O Jesus! is it not time that Thou hadst a house? We give Thee this. Thou didst give it to us first, but we give it back to Thee. It is too good for us, but not half good enough for Thee. Oh! come in and take the best seat here. Walk up and down all these aisles. Speak through these organ-pipes. Throw Thine arm over us in these arches. In the flaming of these chandeliers speak to us, saying: “I am the light of the world.” O King! make this thine audience-chamber. Here proclaim righteousness and make treaties. We clap our hands, we uncover our heads, we lift our ensigns, we cry with multitudinous acclamation until the place rings and the heavens listen: “O King! live for ever!”

Is it not time that He who was born in a stranger's house

and buried in a stranger's grave should have an earthly house? Come in, O Jesus! not the corpse of a buried Christ, but a radiant and triumphant Jesus, conqueror of earth, and heaven, and hell.

"He lives, all glory to His name,  
He lives, my Jesus, still the same  
Oh, the sweet joy this sentence gives—  
I know that my Redeemer lives."

Blessed be His glorious name for ever! ("Amen.")

Again: if you ask the question of the text: "What mean ye by these stones?" I reply that *we mean the communion of saints*. Do you know that there is not a single denomination of Christians in Brooklyn that has not contributed something towards the building of this house? And if ever, standing in this place, there shall be a man who shall try by anything he says to stir up bitterness between different denominations of Christians, may his tongue falter and his cheek blanch, and his heart stop! My friends, if there is any church on earth where there is a mingling of all denominations, it is our church. I just wish that John Calvin and Armenius, if they were not too busy, would come out on the battlements and see us. Sometimes in our prayer-meetings I have heard brethren use phrases of a liturgy, and we know where they came from; and in the same prayer-meetings I have heard brethren make audible ejaculation, "Amen!" "Praise ye the Lord!" and we did not have to guess twice where they came from. When a man knocks at our church door, if he comes from a sect where they will not give him a certificate, we say: "Come in by confession of faith." While Adoniram Judson, the Baptist, and John Wesley, the Methodist, and John Knox, the glorious old Scotch Presbyterian, are shaking hands in heaven, all churches on earth can afford to come into close communication: "One Lord, one faith, one baptism." Oh my brethren—we have had enough of Big Bethel fights

—the 14th New York Regiment fighting the 15th Massachusetts Regiment. Now let all those who are for Christ and stand on the same side, go shoulder to shoulder ("Amen"), and this church instead of having a sprinkling of the Divine blessing, go clear under the wave in one glorious immersion in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. I saw a little child once, in its dying hour, put one arm around its father's neck, and the other arm around its mother's neck, and bring them close down to its dying lips, and give a last kiss. Oh, I said, those two persons will stand very near to each other always after such an interlocking. The dying Christ puts one arm around this denomination of Christians, and the other arm around that denomination of Christians, and He brings them down to His dying lips, while He gives them this parting kiss: "My peace I leave with you. My peace I give unto you."

"How swift the heavenly course they run,  
Whose hearts, and faith, and hopes are one."

I heard a Baptist minister once say that he thought in the Millennium it would be all one great Baptist church; and I heard a Methodist minister say that he thought in the great Millennial day it would be all one great Methodist church; and I have known a Presbyterian minister who thought that in the Millennial day it would be all one great Presbyterian church. Now I think they are all mistaken. I think the Millennial church will be a composite church; and just as you may take the best parts of five or six tunes, and under the skilful hands of a Handel, Mozart, or Beethoven, entwine them into one grand and overpowering symphony, so, I suppose, in the latter days of the world, God will take the best parts of all denominations of Christians, and weave them into

ONE GREAT ECCLESIASTICAL HARMONY,

broad as the earth, and high as the heavens, and that will

be the church of the future. Or, as mosaic is made up of jasper, and agate, and many precious stones, cemented together—mosaic a thousand feet square in St. Marks, or mosaic hoisted into colossal seraphim in St. Sophia—so I suppose God will make, after awhile, one great blending of all creeds, and all faiths, and all Christian sentiments, the amethyst, and the jasper, and the chalcedony of all different experiences and belief, cemented side by side in the great mosaic of the ages; and while the nations look upon the columns and architraves of that stupendous church of the future, and cry out: "What mean ye by these stones?" there shall be innumerable voices to respond—"We mean the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." ("Hallelujah!—Amen!")

I remark again: *we mean by these stones the salvation of the people.* We did not build this church for mere worldly reforms, or for an educational institution, or as a platform on which to read essays and philosophical disquisitions; but a place for the tremendous work of soul-saving. Oh, I had rather be the means in this church of having one soul prepared for a joyful eternity, than five thousand souls prepared for mere worldly success. All churches are in two classes, all communities in two classes, all the race in two classes—believers and unbelievers. Those going into light, these going into darkness. To augment the number of the one and subtract from the number of the other, we built this church; and toward that supreme and eternal idea we dedicate all our sermons, all our songs, all our prayers, all our Sabbath hand-shakings. We want to throw defection into the enemies' ranks. We want to make them either sure render unconditionally to Christ, or else fly in rout, scattering the way with canteens, blankets, and knapsacks. We want to popularise Christ. We would like to tell the story of His love here until men would feel that they had rather

die than live another hour without His sympathy, and love, and mercy. We want to rouse up an enthusiasm for Him greater than was felt for Nathaniel Lyon when he rode along the ranks—greater than was exhibited for Wellington when he came back from Waterloo—greater than was expressed for Napoleon when he stepped ashore from Elba. We really believe in this place Christ will enact the same scenes that were enacted by Him when He landed in the Orient; and there will be such an opening of blind eyes, and unstopping of deaf ears, and casting out of unclean spirits—such silencing bestormed Gennesarets as shall make this house memorable five hundred years after you and I are dead and forgotten. Oh, my friends, we want but one revival in this church, that beginning now and running on to the day when the chisel of time, that brings down even St. Paul's and the Pyramids, shall bring this house into the dust. We want the host of newly-converted souls who shall next Sabbath morning pass in review by this sacramental table—we want them only the first regiment of a great army that will take this place on their way to glory.

But since there are so many uncertainties ahead, perhaps we had better begin now the work of salvation ("Amen"). Oh, that this day of dedication might be the day of emancipation of all imprisoned souls. My friends,

#### DO NOT MAKE THE BLUNDER

of the ship carpenters in Noah's time, who helped to build the ark, but did not get into it. God forbid that you who have been so generous in building this church, should not get under its saving influence. "Come thou and all thy house into the ark." Do you think a man is safe out of Christ? Not one day, not one hour, not one minute, not one second. Three or four years ago, you remember, a rail train broke down a bridge on the way to Albany, and after

the catastrophe, they were looking around among the timbers of the crushed bridge and the fallen train, and found the conductor. He was dying, and had only strength to say one thing, and that was: "hoist the flag for the next train." So there came up to us to-night, voices from the eternal chasm of darkness, and sin, and death, telling us: "You cannot save me, but save those who come after me. Lift the warning. Blow the trumpet, give the alarm. Hoist the flag for the next train."

Oh! that to-night my Lord Jesus would sweep his arm around this great audience, and take you all to his holy heart. You will never see so good a time for personal consecration as now. "What mean ye by these stones?" We mean your redemption from sin, and death, and hell, by the power of an omnipotent Gospel. Lord God Almighty, with Thy presence now shake this house from foundation to capstone. Stretch out Thine arm. Here is the sacrifice. Lord God of Elijah, answer by fire.

Well, the Brooklyn Tabernacle is erected again. The Sabbath after the old Tabernacle was burned, in the Academy of Music, in December, 1872, I prophesied this building. I said it would be dedicated in 1873. I made a mistake of only two months. Would to God that had been the largest mistake I had ever made. But now that it is done, it more than pleases us. We came here to-night not to dedicate it. That was done this morning by an illustrious company of Christian ministers of every name; and that eloquent and thrilling sermon still rings through and through our soul, telling us that "the glory of the second house shall be greater than that of the first." God grant it! But I am here to preach the dedication sermon of all your hearts. In the Episcopal and Methodist Churches, they have a railing around the altar, and the people come and kneel down at that railing and get the sacramental blessing. Well, my friends, it would take

more than a night to gather you in circles around this altar. Then just bow where you are for the blessing.

Aged men, this is the last church you will ever dedicate. May the God who comforted Jacob the patriarch, and Paul the aged, make this house to you the gate of heaven; and when, in your old days, you put on your spectacles to read the hymn or the Scripture lesson, may you get preparation for that land where you shall no more see through a glass darkly. May the warm sunshine of heaven thaw the snow off your foreheads!

Men in mid-life, do you know that this is the place where you are going to get your fatigues rested, and your sorrows appeased, and your souls saved? Do you know that at this altar your sons and daughters will take upon themselves the vows of the Christian, and from this place you will carry out, some of you, your precious dead? Between this baptismal font and this communion table, you will have some of the tenderest of life's experiences. God bless you, old, and young, and middle-aged. The money you have given to this church to-day will be, I hope, the best financial investment you have ever made. Your worldly investments may depend upon the whims of Wall-street, or the honesty of business associates; but the money you have given to the house of the Lord shall yield you large percentage, and declare eternal dividends, in the day when, instead of being the story of one burning church, it shall be the tragedy of a world on fire!

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## WOMAN'S WAR AGAINST THE BOTTLE.

BY REV. T. DE WITT TALMAGE, D.D.

"Awake, awake, Deborah, awake, awake!"—*Judges v. 12.*

A TEXT of five words, and four of them one and the same. It seems that the men of Israel had lost their courage. Trampled into the dust by their oppressors, the cowards had not spirit to rise. Their vineyards destroyed, their women dishonoured, their children slain, the land was dying for a leader worthy of the cause. A holy woman by the name of Deborah saw the desolation, and putting her trust in the Lord, sounded the battle-cry, and by the help of General Barak, launched into the plain ten thousand armed men. The Canaanites, of course, came out with a larger force. They came out against Israel with nine hundred iron chariots, each of these iron chariots having attached to the side of it a long, sharp scythe, so that when these engines of war were driven down to battle, each one of the nine hundred was ready to cut two great swathes of death. But when God gives a mission to a woman, he gives her strength and grace to execute it. The nine hundred chariots of the Canaanites could not save them. They fly! they fly! horse and horseman, chariot and charioteer, officers and troops, in one wild and terrific overthrow. Sisera, their leader, is so frightened in the conflict, that he cannot wait until his team turns around; he leaps from the chariot and starts, full run, for the mountains. Then this epic of the text was composed, to celebrate the grand womanly triumph: "Awake, awake, Deborah, awake, awake!"

My friends, an army of Canaanitish and infernal influences has come down to destroy this fair land. They come on armed with the decanter, and demijohn, and legislative enactment, and brewer's tank, and apothecary's bitters, and distiller's "worm" that never dieth. To meet these influ-



ences, some very brave men have gone out in battle, and have tried to break to pieces these iron chariots of destruction; but for the most part the land has slept. Indeed, it slept until a few weeks ago, at the West, when the Lord God uttered His voice until it rang through the churches, and the homes, and the gin-palaces, and off upon the prairie saying: "Awake, awake, Deborah, awake, awake!" And now, while I speak,

THIS GREAT AUSTERLITZ GOES ON,

and earth, and heaven, and hell await the stupendous issue.

Before I proceed to discuss the modes and policies by which the great sin of drunkenness is to be assaulted, I want to tell you two or three things which I think will bear me out in the statement that something radical needs to be done. The first fact I want to put before you is this: that there are coming up a vast multitude of children in this country who have, from the day of their birth, a thirst for strong drink. Whether it be developed in early life or not, it is there—they have inherited it. Right along the ancestral line, how often goes the river of death! It seems as if their cradle is rocked by the rum fiend. The father sits down to make his will. He says: "In the name of God, amen! I bequeath to my children my houses, and lands, and all my property. Share, and share alike, they must. Hereto I affix my hand and seal, in the presence of witnesses." But that father may at the same time be making a will that he does not recognize. He may be really saying: "In the name of disease, and appetite, and death, amen! I bequeath to my children my thirst for strong drink. My tankards shall be theirs, my condemnation shall be theirs. In the ruin that I have wrought for them, let them share, and share alike. Hereto I put my hand and seal, in the presence of all the astonished host of heaven and all the jubilant harpies

of hell." He does not know that he is making two wills at the same time. There are young men in this house to-day who have had two inheritances: one, an inheritance of dollars—they have nearly spent that; the other, an inheritance of thirst for strong drink—they have not spent that.

In addition to this, there is coming up from the lower haunts of society an uncounted throng of children who have been familiar with the odours of the whisky-jug and the ale-pitcher from the time they started into life. In every fibre of their soul they feel the sting of paternal indulgences, and while your children to-day will be in the Sabbath-school singing "hosanna," there will be a vaster multitude—vaster by millions and millions—of little children, bare-footed, em-bruted in their countenances, filthy and uncombed, who will be singing the song of the drunkard. Their swaddling clothes were torn off the winding sheet of death. Their toy in infancy was a gin-bottle. They were baptized from the laver of woe. Obscene songs were their lullaby. Their inheritance has been a father's curse and a mother's beastliness. Are you surprised that they turn out badly? Aye, if one out of ten thousand turns out anything but badly, you ought to be surprised.

There is another fact I want to present, showing that there is a need of something radical on this subject of the multiplicity of drinking-houses all over our cities. There never has been any lack of these establishments. There never has been much reason for a man's being thirsty a great while. But it was once only like an eruption on the body of the city; now it has become a multitude of carbuncles that threaten the very life of the community. You go down a beautiful street and see carpenters at work. You say: "I wonder what they are going to make there." You go along a few days after, and you see they are painting an ale-pitcher on the sign, and see the red and blue light in the lamp at the

door, as though kindled by a spark from the nether world to which it will decoy very many victims. In those places the villainies of your city are concocted. Those are the places where men whet their courage for arson, and for garroting, and for burglary, and for murder. I can remember the time when these saloons were chiefly on the street corners. Now they flame out from the heart of the block—a long line of fortifications levelling their enginery of death. Sometimes they call them “hotels.” Sometimes they call them “wine-cellars.” Sometimes they call them “restaurants.” Sometimes they call them “retreats.” Sometimes they call them “concert saloons,” where

#### MUSIC PLAYS THE MARCH OF DEATH.

Sometimes they call them “casinos,” combining all the abominations of the theatre, grog-shop, and brothel. Sometimes they call them “lager-beer saloons,” under which, I suppose, there are more villainies and more obscenities than under any other name. These institutions are springing up all around about us. They come like some fabulous monster, taking at one swallow a hundred victims. They are plagues sweating on your great thoroughfares, and rotting away the life of Brooklyn and New York. They are on every avenue—Fulton-avenue, Atlantic-avenue, Lafayette-avenue, Gates-avenue—girding the city with a chain of eternal fire.

We cannot even have the laws against them executed. All through this country it is against the law to sell liquor on the Sabbath-day. Where is the city that keeps that law? Where are the police? Where are the mayors? Where are the common councils? Where are the legislative assemblies? The fact is, that when the Republicans are in power they dare not execute the law lest they lose votes, and when the Democrats are in power they dare not execute the law lest they lose votes. Meanwhile, between these political

parties who are struggling for the spoils of office, the virtue and the religion of the city die.

What chance is there for the morals of our city when these places are so easy of access, and when, if you want to get out of the smell of rum, you have to ride five or six miles out of town, and even the outskirts of the city are sometimes worse than the heart of it? What chance is there for that young man? Temptation before him, temptation behind him, in the loft above him, and in the cellar beneath him; and when our very best citizens patronize such places! They are cold, and they must go in and get something warm; they are warm, and they must get something to cool off. They lose money, and begin to drink to keep up their spirits; they gain something, and then they can afford to drink. And so the casks are filled, and the strychnine is poured in, and the leaks are stopped, and the faucets are drawn, and the intoxication is swilled down, and sometimes, standing before professed Christian men, their breath is so foul with drink that I feel tempted to bury my face in my pocket-handkerchief.

Look at another fact. Many of the drug-stores of our country, that ought to be the agencies of health, are becoming the means of dissipation and death. There are forms of disease that need a stimulus, and under a prudent and skilful physician, I think that alcohol has an important work to do; but what have you to say about the deceptions practised upon people in this day by bitters—bitters of all sorts—cordials, tonics, Hostetter Bitters, Golden Bitters, Plantation Bitters—bitters that make a man's life bitter, and his death bitter, and his eternity bitter. Bitters! Now, I say, if you are going to blast a man for time and eternity, give him a fair chance. Put on the outside of the bottle what it is. But a man, maintaining, as he thinks, his sobriety, goes and gets a bottle of bitters and puts it on his desk.

That is gone. After awhile he gets another, and another, and another, and one day, while he is seated in his room, the cork flies out of the black bottle of bitters, and with it a fiend that grapples the man by the throat, and says: "Ah! I have been chasing about for you fifteen years. I have got you now. Down with you to perdition!" If you propose to destroy a man, give him at least a fair fight.

Take two appalling statistics. In one year we spent in this country, one billion, one hundred and ten millions, four hundred thousand dollars more money in making, and selling, and buying intoxicating drinks, than for the woollen goods, and cotton goods, and flour, and meal, and boots, and shoes, and clothing of the people. In other words, we paid in this country, in one year, one billion, one hundred and ten millions, four hundred thousand dollars more to kill the country than to make it live. Put that down in your memorandum books for one item.

Then the other item is this: If we should take all the drunkards in this country, and gather them in battle array, five men abreast, they would make

A LINE A HUNDRED MILES LONG.

So that, if you wanted to marshal that host, and look at the companies, and the regiments, and the battalions, and you wanted to review them, you would have to mount one horse and ride until he was exhausted, and then mount another horse and ride until he was exhausted, and another horse, until he was exhausted; and then if you wanted to marshal that great host, and had a voice loud enough to order them to "Forward march!" their step would make the earth shake and the gates of hell tremble. That is the other item.

Now, if all these things are so, is it not time that something great, something earnest, something radical be done? Revolution! Revolution! In the light of these things I come to

consider this great movement, which has attracted the attention of the whole land towards the West. You ask me, as I have often been asked in private—you ask me silently two questions. You say, in the first place: "Do you approve of that assault made by the women of the West upon the liquor business?" And, in the second place: "Would you have the same assault and the same scenes enacted here at the East?" I take your questions separately and alone. I answer your first. You say: "Do you approve of the assault that has been made by the women of the West upon the grog-shops there?" I reply that there have been some things done there that I have no sympathy with, and I also assert that so long as we have so many fools masculine, we ought to be willing to have a few fools feminine. Then I go further on and aver that the campaign waged at the West by the women against the grog-shops of Ohio, and Illinois, and Indiana, and Michigan, is the grandest and most magnificent thing that has been on earth since the day when Deborah, in the name of the Lord God Almighty, hurled ruin and death on the armed oppressors of Israel. Why, it seems that by the force of prayer—certainly, there cannot be anything wrong about that—and by the force of Christian song—certainly, there cannot be anything wrong about that—there were, in a little while, three hundred saloons shut up, and in some villages all the drinking places were abandoned. You tell me they will be open again very soon. I reply: is it nothing to shut up the fires of hell for six weeks? Why, it seems that these men engaged in that business, did not know how to cope with this kind of warfare. They knew how to fight the Main Liquor Law, and they knew how to fight the National Temperance Society, and they knew how to fight the Sons of Temperance and Good Samaritans; but when Deborah appeared upon the scene, Sisera took to his feet, and got to the mountains. It seems

that they did not know how to contend against "Coronation," and "Old Hundred," and "Brattle-street," and "Bethany," they were so very intangible. These men found that they could not accomplish much against that kind of warfare, and in one of the cities, a German regiment was brought out, all armed, to disperse the women. They came down in battle array; but, ho! what poor success, for that German regiment was made up of gentlemen, and gentlemen do not like to shoot women with hymn-books in their hands. Oh! they found that gunning for female prayer-meetings was a very poor business. No real damage was done, although there has been threat of violence after threat of violence all over the land. Let us give fair warning to all military companies, and to all mayors, and to all courts of law, that on the day that one of these Christian women engaged in this holy war shall, under the point of soldiers' bayonet, or under the stroke of police club, fall down wounded or slain, on that day there will be a fire kindled in this country, a fire of indignation and national wrath, that all the waters of the Mississippi, and the Ohio, and the Hudson cannot put out; and the influence will keep on rolling over this whole country, until the last liquor shop, and the last distillery, and the last gin store, and the last brewery shall be trampled out under the feet of an indignant people. I tell you that the curse of the Lord God Almighty is on that business, for ever, and for ever. Amen.

They say that it was not dignified for these women—they ought to have been home crocheting, or watching the loaves of bread in the oven to see that they did not get too brown and hard. Oh! my soul, which would have been most dignified? to have stayed in the homes already desolated by rum, shivering amid half-clad children, waiting for the staggering step of the father, or brother, or son, or to put on the only hat and shawl that had not been pawned away by the companion, and go out under the leadership of some

great-souled Deborah, and with the famished family at the back, attempt with the artillery of prayer and song to put an end to those institutions where the domestic ruin had originated? Who are you, that seated in your homes of plenty and sobriety, you should be so severely critical of these women of the West, who, not for personal display, not for a play spell, but because they wanted to get back the homes of which they had been robbed, and the children's inheritance, and the souls of the men who had been imperilled by strong drink, went forth to do their duty? When my voice shall, through the printing press, reach those women at the West, I want to say to them :

"GOD SPEED YOU IN THE WORK !"

"Awake, awake, Deborah; awake, awake." Nine hundred chariots cannot do you any harm. The Lord of Hosts is with you, and He is mightier than all that can be against you.

Now, I come to answer the second question : "Would you have the same kind of war upon the liquor establishments made at the East, and in our midst, as at the West?" I say most emphatically, no ; but for different reasons from what I have ever heard given. It is not because I think that the women of the West were undignified or unchristian, it is not because I think that the women of Brooklyn are too good for such a holy iconoclasm ; but it is because there seems to be no Deborah with sufficient faith in God to lead forth the host. Here at the East, we are all watching to see what somebody else will say, and we are bound hand and foot by the conventionalities of society more than at the West, and at the flutter of a newspaper, we are so frightened that we are not fit for any great warfare of the kind of which I speak. I will, however, say, oh mothers, and sisters, and daughters of Brooklyn, I really think if you had as



much faith in God as your sisters at the West have, and the same recklessness of human criticism, I really believe that in one month three-fourths of the grog-shops of Brooklyn would be closed, and there would be running through the gutters of the streets, Burgundy, and Cognac, and Heidsieck, and Old Port, and Schiedam Schnapps, and Lager-beer; and you would save your fathers, and your husbands, and your sons, first, from a drunkard's grave, and secondly, from a drunkard's hell!

But the time has not come. I have read the reports of the women who have assembled in this city in different churches, and I see that the time has not come. A woman cannot do that which she thinks she cannot, and you cannot. There is no Deborah with enough faith in God, and recklessness of human criticism, to go forth in the work. I really think that, perhaps, things have got to be worse before they are any better. I do not know but that there must yet be one dead in each house, slain by this destroying angel, and that the piano that you brought into your parlour last week will have to go down under the sheriff's hammer, and some midnight your son be tossed into your front door dead drunk, and the rose on your daughter's cheek fade under the breath of the rum fiend, as her father stoops over to kiss her "good night;" and this tornado of domestic desolation go on until our great cities shall be one wreck of dissipation and crime. I do not know but it will have to be that way before the women of the East are as brave as the women of the West.

But since we are not ready for that war, there is something in which all the women of my church are ready to engage, and in which all the women of this city are ready to be marshalled, and that is in some kind of war against the drinking usages of society. Oh! young woman, never give your hand in marriage to a man who tampers with strong drink, any more than you would take hold of a basilisk. You

would reform him by marriage, would you? Never! I have seen the experiment tried too often, and the women who made the unsuccessful experiment by marriage of reforming a man, some of them are in suicides' graves, some are in the almshouse, and all the rest are wretched, without one exception. Reform him, will you? Why, where one woman has succeeded in that experiment, there are five hundred women buried in the ruins. Young woman, if a young man does not think enough of you to give up the wine cup, tell him plainly that you will not contest for his affections with so vile a rival. Do not be hasty to leave your father's house in such an unseaworthy craft. How many a noble barque has been driven to destruction on the rocks through the intoxication of the captain! Ah! look out how you trust your voyage of life in the hands of an inebriate. The rocks! the rocks!

Let the mothers teach their children from the very start, what an accursed thing rum is. Give the lesson to them with "Brown's Shorter Catechism." Give every emphasis to the truth, and then pray morning, noon, and night, and until the day of your death, that your sons, aye, your daughters too, may be saved from these overwhelming temptations.

Let sisters make the home every evening bright; make it very bright. You do not know the allurements that are around your brother. You cannot afford to stand by his bruised brow when he is dead, as I knew a sister who once did when the night before she had heard her brother howling in the delirium, while three men could not hold him down, for he arose in the couch and beat back imaginary demons, crying: "begone! begone!"

#### THE TEMPERANCE ARMY.

We are not ready for the crusade of the West here, but I want to marshal every woman in this house in one of three regiments. In the first place, we will have a regiment of

mothers, their step not so strong as once it was, for they have come a great way; but their faith in God mighty—the God who has never forsaken them. Alas! for the mothers who bend over the son scorched with this fiery sirocco. Oh! God! appease their agony for a little while.

In the second regiment, we will have all the wives of the country; some of their homes already invaded by this evil; their domestic joy somewhat shaken; the next ten years charged with a good deal of uncertainty.

The third regiment will be made up of the daughters of the land; their comfort and their respectability dependent upon the sobriety of their parents; their brow not yet clouded; their lips unacquainted with the acrid draught that a drunkard's child always has to drink.

A man said to a little girl going along the street: "Why, Jennie, I don't see you any more. You used to come to my house begging for cold victuals. I haven't seen you for weeks. Where have you been, Jennie?" "Oh," she replied, "we don't want cold victuals any more. Papa don't drink now, and so we have warm victuals." God have mercy on the drunkard's child!

Now, the three regiments are formed. Forward! ye women baptized of the Holy Ghost. Forward! into the strife. Your ensigns shall not be stained with tears or blood. No skeleton will mark the line of your march, but in the wake of this great army there will smile a harvest of reformed inebriates, and there will be heard the shout of children at the return of their fathers from the captivity of the wine cup. The mountains and the hills will break forth into singing, and all the trees of the wood will clap their hands. "Instead of the thorn, shall come the fir tree; instead of the briar, shall come the myrtle tree; and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."

Postponing until next Sabbath morning what I have to say to the men who are tampering with strong drinks ; postponing until next Sabbath morning my counsel to all those who have already the shackles fastened upon them ; postponing until next Sabbath morning, the completion of the discourse that I have begun now, I will only say to the families of my congregation, banish the wine cup from your table, dash the beaker from your lip, and in the strength of God, resolve that you will no more have anything to do with strong drink ; for I tell you now that there is a multitude of you kept away from Christ by intoxicating liquor, and there are some of you who profess to be followers of Jesus, members of my church, who are drinking a little too much. Though you have not gone far on in sin, though you may never have been intoxicated, as I suppose you have not, I know some of you are drinking a little too much, and so, I ask you all to abstain. Come out on the side of sobriety, come out on the side of the Christian religion. Let me tell you now : no drunkard hath eternal life, and that some of you are running an awful risk of being drunkards.

Oh, may the Lord God Almighty vouchsafe to save you, and me, and our families, and this whole country from the scathing, scalding, blasting, damning influence of strong drink !

“ We wage a mighty warfare  
Against a mighty foe !  
Who through our land with busy hand  
Is spreading want and woe.  
He's saddened many a light heart,  
And many a thousand slain  
Then come with us your voice to raise,  
And bid mankind abstain.”

## THE CONGRATULATIONS OF HEAVEN.

"Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth."—*Luke xv. 7.*

A LOST sheep! There is nothing more thoroughly lost than that. I look through the window of a shepherd's cabin. It is night, and the candles are lighted. The shepherd's staff stands in the corner. He has just shaken his coat from the dirt and dust. His neighbours are in, and he sits down, panting and exhausted, on a rough bench, while his wife, and children, and friends say to him: "Come now, tell us the story of how you found it—the poor thing!" "Well," he says, "this morning I went out to the yard to count the flocks, and they didn't count right, for, McDonald, you know, we have a hundred of them, and I counted ninety-five, ninety-six, ninety-seven, ninety-eight, ninety-nine. I said: 'There's one missing.' So I counted again—ninety-five, ninety-six, ninety-seven, ninety-eight, ninety-nine—sure enough there is one gone. And I whistled for the dogs and I started. I crossed the bridge, and I leaped the gullies, and I tracked the woods, and I cried, 'So ho! So ho!' but not a bleat of the poor lamb did I hear. I said to myself: 'It must have dropped into a pit, or a pack of wolves have come down and sucked its life out.' But I went on, for it was a favourite lamb—it was that one, you know, with a black spot on the right shoulder—the one that came up and licked my hand when I used to cross the field. It was a favourite lamb, and I kept on, and I cried as I went. And after a little while I heard the dogs bark, and I said: 'What's that?' and I hastened over the hill, and no sooner had I come over the hill-top than there I saw the poor lamb. It had fallen into a ditch, and it was covered with slush and slime; and when I leaned over and lifted it out, O, I wish you could have seen how lovingly and gratefully it looked into my face. Poor thing! it was so fagged out and so frightened it could not

walk ; and I lifted it and I put it upon my shoulder, and I started home. O, it was a long tramp, and that coat hanging there shows in just what a condition the lamb was when I shouldered it. But now it is safe in the yard, thank God !” And the shepherd’s wife spread the table and brought out the best fare they could afford, and the company sat up very late that night, and they ate, and they drank, and they sang, and they danced, and they told over and over again the story of the lost sheep.

Well, my friends, it was by such rustic, yet tender illustrations, that Christ told the story of a man going away from God and then coming back, in the familiar parable of the lost sheep, closing with the words of my text : “ Likewise, joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth.” To repent is to feel that you have been very bad, and to turn over a new leaf, and to ask God’s help and forgiveness ; and when a man does that, they hear of it right away in heaven.

#### THERE ARE NO GOSSIPS IN HEAVEN

to go about and chatter and laugh when they hear that a man has fallen ; but when they hear that a man is saved, then there are a great many to go about and tell the tidings : and it is astonishing how soon the news spreads from the north gate of heaven to the south gate, and from the eastern gate to the western gate. In ten minutes all the inhabitants know it, and “ there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth.” I would not be surprised if I had found out that there were heavenly congratulations over the day of Pentecost, when three thousand people were converted. But mark the emphasis of my text : “ There is joy in heaven over *one* ”—just *one*—“ sinner that repenteth.”

You have often noticed churches with two towers. But I suppose that the temple of God on high may have *four* towers, and sometimes one of them rings, and sometimes

they all ring. Here is a moral man. He never said a bad word. He never did a mean action. Everybody loves him. He is not a Christian; but after awhile he sees that he is a sinner, and he cries to God, and he is saved, and *one* tower of heaven rings out with beautiful chime. Here is another man. He is very bad. He knows it. Everybody knows it. Still he is kept in respectable society. He is far from being an outlaw. That man is converted to God. Now, *two* towers in heaven chime out the glorious tidings. Here is an outcast of society. Last night he was picked up out of the gutter and taken to the station-house. He has gone through all the crimes against God and man. He is utterly loathsome. Nobody wants to touch him. To-night, in all his wretchedness, he cries out: "O Lord help me! O Lord, forgive me!" Now, *three* towers in heaven chime out the tidings. Yonder is a poor waif of the street. She has gone down until no one has any pity for her. As she goes under the gaslight, and you see her, your soul shivers with a great horror. Going along, to-night, by the Midnight Mission, she hears Christians singing. They are singing a very beautiful tune: "All may come, whoever will, this Man receives poor sinners still." And she puts into that harbour. She kneels down at the first bench she comes to, and she cries out: "O Thou who didst have mercy on Mary Magdalen, take my bleeding feet off of the hot pavement of hell." Now the *four* towers of heaven chime out the tidings; and they who pass along the streets say: "Hark! some great news has come up. Some great sinner is saved; the four towers are ringing." And "there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth."

We see, first, in this subject, that—

#### WE CAN AUGMENT THE JOY OF HEAVEN.

I hear people talk as though they thought that heaven

was as happy as it could be. No! No! I think that one half of the harps are not yet strung, nor one half of the thrones mounted. When all this world is redeemed, do you not suppose that they will be happier in heaven about it? When that Christian mother who died, leaving her son a vagabond, hears in heaven that he has come to God, do you not suppose her joy is augmented? When I was chaplain in the army, and I saw a sergeant with lathered horse, and blood on his spurs, dash past in full run, I said: "He has got some important message." Now look and see those two angels, wing to wing, flying for the throne of God. I see by their shining faces that they have good news to tell. What is the matter? Do you tell me they cannot bring any joy to the glorified? They will! They will! "For there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth." There is a man yonder, standing in the gallery, who, if he would, might light up a bonfire on the hills of heaven. He might, with the torch of his own repentance, kindle up great gladness there. When your little child was on earth, before the sweet thing flew away from you into heaven, how you used to try to make her happy—did you not? You crowded your pockets many and many a time with gifts, and you came home, and when your latch-key rattled in the door she rushed out and cried: "Father, what have you brought me?" O, now, that those loved ones are in glory, would you not like to give them new gladness? You may, weeping father. You may, weeping mother. Your repentance, to-night, would be sufficient motive to send those children skipping with eternal gladness, for "there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth."

I believe that if this whole audience should, to-night, come to God, there would be as great joy in heaven as there ever has been there; perhaps greater joy than has ever been since the first pearly gate swung on its hinges; and



instead of being a Pentecost of three thousand, it would be a turning to God of five thousand. O, heaven! smite with all thy hammers, to-night, and let our chains fall off. O, Holy Spirit, with the gleaming sword of thy truth, strike, and let our souls be free. A general said to his army, after they had gained a slight battle: "Hush, now; no shouting; no shouting." But it would be impossible to keep quiet the armies of heaven, to-night, if it were announced that we all had come to God. There would be shouting, shouting, shouting; for "there is joy in heaven among the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

#### HEAVEN NOT FAR OFF.

Again, my subject teaches me that *heaven is not so very far off after all*. I often hear people talk as though heaven were a great distance. The departed must go hundreds of thousands of miles until they get to another star, and then millions of miles from that, and then they get to heaven. They tell us that heaven is the centre of the universe, and that we are on the outer rim of the universe. But we have learned to calculate distance by the time it takes to travel it, and by the speed and the frequency of the intercommunication, and by that estimate, heaven is not far off. It certainly is not twelve hours off, for Jesus said to the dying thief: "*this day, this day, shalt thou be with me in paradise.*" And I suppose that the wing of the soul, when it leaves the body, is so swift, that it does not take a day, or an hour, or a minute, or a ten thousandth part of a second for it to flash into glory; and as to the intercommunication, there are hundreds of souls every day going up from the church on earth to the church in heaven, and thousands of ministering spirits every day coming down from heaven to earth, and all the King's highway from earth to heaven is thronged with messengers, coming, going; coming, going!

I had occasion to send a telegram, under the sea, and it being considerable expense, I put it in as small space as possible. You can send a very important telegram with two words. I have thought to-night that if ministering spirits flying up from this place to the throne of God, wanted to announce the redemption of any soul here, it would take only two words: "John repented," "Mary repented," "father repented," "mother repented," "child repented;" and "there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth."

Again: This subject teaches me that *the salvation of the soul must be of surpassing importance*. When the French government passed from Thiers to McMahon, I do not suppose it was reported in heaven. When, in the recent English elections, the contest was between Conservatives and Liberals the result, I do not suppose, was reported in heaven. But there is one item that must go up—there is one thing that must be told. Let the flying hoofs of God's courier clash through the portals, and the news fly from gate to temple, and from temple to mansion, and from mansion to throne, that one soul has been converted.

Last summer, among the White Mountains, a stage driver was very reckless. He had a large company of passengers and drove six horses. Coming along a dangerous place, the leaders shied off, and the stage was thrown over the rocks. A few men leaped out and were saved, others went down and were bruised, and some were slain. When those who were saved got home, how their friends must have congratulated them, that they got off from all that peril. Well! the angels of God look down, and see men driving along the edge of eternal disasters, drawn by leaping, foaming, uncontrollable perils: and when a man just before he comes to the fatal capsize, leaps off and comes away in safety, do you wonder that

THE ANGELS OF GOD CLAP THEIR HANDS

and cry: "Good! Good! saved from hell! Saved for heaven! Saved for ever?"

The redemption of a soul must be a very wonderful thing, or heaven would not make such a jubilation about it. It must be a great thing, or there would not be so much excitement in that land where coronations are every-day occurrences, and the stones of the field are amethysts and chrysoprases. It takes a great thing to make the English Houses of Parliament or the American Supreme Court or the House of Congress adjourn—the death of a member or some very important event. It must be a great thing to make heaven adjourn all its honours and all other subjects, which thing it does when a soul is converted; for "there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth." Around that one soul, sweep to night, in circle of cloud, and mist, and fire, and song, and rapture, and woe, all God's universe. At its fall, devils beat the gongs of darkness: at its redemption, heaven puts its lip to trumpet, its finger to harp, its hammer to bell; and "there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth."

Now, it is on such a thing as that, I plead to-night. I bring a message from the throne of God: "Repent poor soul. Give up thy sin and take Christ." I ask you to make no experiment. I know what I am talking about. Forty years ago, my parents carried me to the old church at Somerville, and under the hands of Mr. Van Kleeck, the good minister, the waters of baptism were put upon my face; but that did not save me. Afterward, I learned to kneel at the family altar, and father and mother, and a brother and a sister—all four of whom have been some time in glory—were there. But that did not save me. Afterwards, my brother Daniel—these are his sons and daughters whom you find in our church to-day—my brother Daniel said to me: "De Witt, if you like to go to school and to college,

and get an education, I will pay your way through." He kept the promise: but that did not save me. I have had a great many good friends—influential friends—but that did not save me. I read Doddridge's "Rise and Progress" and Baxter's "Call to the Unconverted," until I was almost wild; but that did not save me. I heard, from Presbyterian pulpits and Methodist camp-meetings, sermons mighty enough to wake the dead; but that did not save me. Then Christ came. He came with a brow red with carnage, and limping with the wound in the foot, and He said: "Poor soul, it is high time you took your feet off my bleeding heart. I forgive you. Repent! Repent!" And though there may have been greater joy in heaven over some other souls, because of results wider reaching, still I *know* that when I gave my soul to Christ, there were some in heaven made happier by the thought; for "there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth," and that is me.

"TO DAY, IF YE WILL HEAR HIS VOICE."

Can you not come to-day, and give your heart to God? Standing here, I really believe that if you do not come to God to-night, some of you never will. Some of you are putting it off for one thing, and others for another thing. Perhaps it is because you have to make some sacrifices in order to become Christians. Can you not make sacrifices? I wish you could have heard the story of a young man who stood up in the audience this morning. He had to give up a living for Christ. He was in a business that he thought was inconsistent with the Christian service, and he said to his wife: "I can't be a Christian and do this." "Then," she replied, "give up the business." They gave up their living for Christ. What can you give up? "Oh," says some one here; "my heart is so hard. It is so full of sin, I can't look up." Can't you? Perhaps you can do as the boy did

in the hospital. He said to the lad on the couch in the same ward of the hospital: "Jesus comes through these wards every night, and He takes away these children into heaven. I wonder why He don't take me? I am so sick and I am so tired. I think to-night I shall hold up my hand while I sleep, and Jesus going through the wards of the hospital will see my hand up, and then He will know I want to go away with Him, and He will take me." The next morning, the nurse walked through the wards of the hospital, and, sure enough, Charlie was dead. He laid with one hand extended in the air, and by the other hand he held the elbow. During the night, Christ had walked through the wards of the hospital, and He had seen the wasted hand of the poor little sufferer lifted toward Him, and He answered the prayer, and took him. Oh soul, sick and dying in sin, can you not to-night lift one hand of solicitation to Jesus of Nazareth as He passes by? This very moment He bends over you. Oh Gospel-hardened man, oh Gospel-hardened woman, can you not, this night, try to catch the attention of the Master? And are you not willing to say:

"I'm a sinner and nothing at all,  
But Jesus Christ is my all in all!"

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### ORDERED BACK TO THE GUARD ROOM.

"Felix trembled and answered: go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee."—*Acts* xxiv. 25.

A CITY of marble was Cæsarea. Wharves of marble, houses of marble, temples of marble. This being the ordinary architecture of the place, you may imagine something of the splendour of Governor Felix's residence. In a room of that palace, floor tessellated, windows curtained, ceiling fretted, the whole scene affluent with Tyrian purple,

and statues, and pictures, and carvings, sat a very dark-complexioned man by the name of Felix, and beside him a woman of extraordinary beauty, whom he had stolen by breaking up another domestic circle. She was only eighteen years of age, a princess by birth, and unwittingly waiting for her doom—that of being buried alive in the ashes and scoria of Mount Vesuvius; which in sudden eruption, one day, put an end to her abominations. Well, one afternoon, Drusilla, seated in the palace, weary with the magnificent stupidities of the place, says to Felix: “You have a very distinguished prisoner, I believe, by the name of Paul. Do you know he is one of my countrymen? I should very much like to see him, and I should very much like to hear him speak, for I have heard so much about his eloquence. Besides that, the other day, when he was being tried in another room of this palace, and the windows were open, I heard the applause that greeted the speech of Lawyer Tertullus, as he denounced Paul. Now, I very much wish I could hear Paul speak. Won’t you let me hear him speak?” “Yes,” said Felix, “I will. I will order him up now from the guard-room.” Clank, clank, comes a chain up the marble stairway, and there is a shuffle at the door, and in comes Paul, a little old man, prematurely old through exposure—only sixty years of age, but looking as though he were eighty. He bows very courteously before the governor and the beautiful woman by his side. They say: “Paul, we have heard a great deal about your speaking; give us now a specimen of your eloquence.” Oh! if there ever was a chance for a man to show off, Paul had a chance there. He might have harangued them about Grecian art, about the wonderful water-works he had seen at Corinth, about the Acropolis by moonlight, about prison life in Philippi, about “what I saw in Thessalonica,” about the old mythologies; but “No!” Paul said to himself: “I am now on the way

to martyrdom, and this man and woman will soon be dead, and this is my only opportunity to talk to them about the things of eternity." And just there and then there broke in upon the scene a peal of thunder. It was the voice of a judgment-day speaking through the words of the decrepid apostle. As that grand old missionary proceeded with his remarks, the stoop begins to go out of his shoulders, and he rises up, and his countenance is illumined with the glories of a future life, and his shackles rattle and grind as he lifts his fettered arm, and with it hurls upon his abashed auditors the bolts of God's indignation. Felix grew very white about the lips. His heart beat unevenly. He put his hand to his brow, as though to stop the quickness and violence of his thoughts. He drew his robe tighter about him, as under a sudden chill. His eyes glare, and his knees shake, and as he clutches the side of his chair in a very paroxysm of terror, he orders the sheriff to take Paul back to the guard-room. "Felix trembled, and said: go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee."

A young man came one night to our services, with pencil in hand, to caricature the whole scene, and make mirth of those who should express any anxiety about their souls: but I met him at the door, his face very white, tears running down his cheek as he said: "Do you think there is any chance for me?" Felix trembled, and so, may God grant, may it be here to-night!

I propose to give you two or three reasons why I think Felix sent Paul back to the guard-room, and adjourned this whole subject of religion. The first reason was, he *did not want to give up his sins*. He looked around; there was Drusilla. He knew that when he became a Christian, he must send her back to Azizus, her lawful husband, and he said to himself: "I will risk the destruction of my immortal

soul, sooner than I will do that." How many there are now who cannot get to be Christians, because they will not abandon their sins! In vain all their prayers and all their church-going. You cannot keep these darling sins and win heaven; and to-night, some of you will have to decide between the wine-cup, and unlawful amusements, and lascivious gratifications on the one hand, and eternal salvation on the other. Delilah sheared the locks of Samson; Salome danced Herod into the pit; Drusilla blocked up the way to heaven for Felix; and unless some of you repent, you shall likewise perish. Yet when I present the subject to-night, I fear that some of you will say: "Not quite yet. Don't be so precipitate in your demands. I have a few tickets yet that I have to use. I have a few engagements that I must keep. I want to stay a little longer in the whirl of conviviality—a few more guffaws of unclean laughter, a few more steps on the road to death, and then, sir, I will listen to what you say. 'Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.'". Do you know that your boat is on the edge of the maelstrom, and that the foam on the wave is the frothing lip of the destroyed; and that the gleam in the water is the glaring eyeballs of the banished; and that the roar of the wave is the groan of the damned? Oh! I know that it is a great deal easier, when you are in a boat, to pull ahead the same way you are going; but if, to-night, you see that you are within a few yards of the vortex, and that this may be your last hour—aye, your last moment, you had better turn around in the boat, you had better clutch with both hands the handles of the oars, as with a death grip, and, putting the blades down into the black waters, pull for your eternal life, crying: "Lord, save me, I perish!" Can you not offer such a prayer to-night, O man! long wandering away from your God? Who is it that I see running up



and down in the prison-house of the lost, now trying to break through this gate, and, failing, turning around and rushing to the other gate, and beating against it, and in despair crying: "Let me get out?" Who is it? Some soul to-night that cannot give up his indulgencies; some soul to-night that is bound hand and foot by the powers of darkness; some soul here that has a darling sin that he cannot sacrifice, and who says to me, when I present the great themes of God and eternity to his soul: "Not yet; go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee."

Another reason why Felix sent Paul back to the guard-room and adjourned this subject was, *he was so very busy*. In ordinary times he found the affairs of state absorbing, but those were extraordinary times. The whole land was ripe for insurrection. The Sicarii, a band of assassins were already prowling around the palace, and I suppose he thought: "I can't attend to religion while I am so pressed by affairs of state." It was business, among other things, that ruined his soul, and I suppose there are three thousand people in this house, to-night, who are not children of God because they have so much business. It is business in the store—losses, gains, unfaithful *employées*. It is business in your law office—subpœnas, writs you have to write out, papers you have to file, arguments you have to make. It is your medical profession, with its broken nights, and the exhausting anxieties of life hanging upon your treatment. It is your real estate office, your business with landlords and tenants, and the failure of men to meet their obligations with you. Aye, with some of those who are here, it is the annoyance of the kitchen, and the sitting-room, and the parlour,—the wearing economy of trying to meet large expenses with a small income. Ten thousand voices of "business, business, business," drown the voice of the Eternal Spirit, silencing

the voice of the advancing judgment-day, overcoming the voice of an agonizing eternity; and they cannot hear, they cannot listen. They say: "Go thy way for this time." Some of you look upon your goods, you look upon your profession, you look upon your memorandum books, and you see the demands that are made this very week upon your time and your patience, and your money, and while I am entreating you about your soul and the danger of procrastination, you say: "Go thy way for this time: when I have a convenient season I will call for thee." Oh Felix, why be bothered about the affairs of this world so much more than about the affairs of glory or perdition? Do you not know that when death comes, you will have to stop business, though it be in the most exacting period of it, between the payment of the money and the taking of the receipt. The moment he comes you will have to go. Death waits for no man, however high, however low. Will you put your office, will you put your shop in comparison with the affairs of an eternal world? Affairs that involve thrones, palaces, dominions eternal. Will you put two hundred acres of ground against immensity? Will you put forty or fifty years of your life against millions of ages? Oh Felix, you might better postpone everything else, for do you not know that the upholstering of Tyrian purple in your palace will fade, and the marble blocks of Cæsarea will crumble, and the breakwater at the beach, made of great blocks of stone sixty feet long, must give way before the perpetual wash of the sea; but the redemption that Paul offers you, will be for ever? and yet, and yet, and yet you waive him back to the guard-room, saying: "Go thy way for this time: when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee."

Again: Felix adjourned this subject of religion and put off Paul's argument, because he *could not give up the honours of the world*. He was afraid somehow he would be compro-

mised, himself, in this matter. Remarks he made afterward showed him to be intensely ambitious. Oh, how he hugged the favour of men ! I never saw the honours of this world in their hollowness and hypocrisy so much as I have seen them within the last few days, as I have been looking over the life and death of that wonderful man just departed, Charles Sumner. Now that he is dead the whole nation takes off the hat. As he goes out towards the place of burial, even Independence Hall, in Philadelphia, asks that his remains may stop there on their way to Boston. The flags are at half-mast, and the minute-guns on Boston Common throb, now that his heart has ceased to beat. Was it always so ? While he lived, how censured of legislative resolutions, how caricatured of the pictorials ; how charged with every motive mean and ridiculous ; how all the urns of scorn and hatred, and Billingsgate emptied upon his head ; how, when struck down in Senate chamber, there were hundreds of thousands of people who said : " Good for him, served him right ! " how, the summer before last, he had to put the ocean between him and his maligners, that he might have a little peace ; and how, when he went off sick, they said he was broken-hearted because he could not get to be President or Secretary of State. Oh Commonwealth of Massachusetts ! who is that man that sleeps to-night in your public hall, covered with garlands and wrapped in the stars and stripes ? Is that the man who, only a few months ago, you denounced as the foe of republican and democratic institutions ? Is that the same man ? You were either wrong then or you are wrong now—a thing most certain, oh Commonwealth of Massachusetts ! Ye American people, ye cannot, by one week of funeral eulogium and newspaper leaders which the dead Senator can neither read nor hear, atone for twenty-five years of maltreatment and caricature. When I see a man like that pursued by all the hounds of the

political kennel so long as he lives, and then buried under garlands almost mountain high, and amid the lamentations of a whole nation, I say to myself: What an unutterably hypocritical thing is all human applause and all human favour! You took twenty-five years in trying to pull down his fame, and now, you will take twenty-five years in trying to build his monument. You were either wrong then, or you are wrong now. My friends, was there ever a better commentary on the hollowness of all earthly favour? If there are young men in this house who are postponing religion in order that they may have the favours of this world, let me persuade them of their complete folly. If you are looking forward to gubernatorial, senatorial, or presidential chair, let me show you your great mistake. Can it be that now, in the presence of these great national solemnities, there is any young man saying: "Let me have some political office, let me have some of these high positions of trust and power, and then I will attend to religion; but not now. 'Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season I will call for thee!'"

When Paul's chain rattled down the marble stairs of Felix, that was Felix's last chance for heaven. Judging from his character afterwards, he was a reprobate and abandoned.

It is eighteen centuries now since Felix lost his soul; it is lost yet. I suppose that Drusilla went to the same place. One day, in Southern Italy, there was a trembling of the earth, and the air got black with smoke intershot with liquid rocks, and Vesuvius rained upon her and upon her sons a horrible tempest of ashes and fire. They did not reject religion; they only put it off. They did not understand that that day—that that hour when Paul stood before them—was the pivotal time upon which everything was poised, and that it tipped the wrong way. Their convenient season

came when Paul and his guardsman entered the palace: It went away when Paul and his guardsman left. Have you never seen men waiting for a convenient season? There is such a great fascination about it, that though you may have come in here to-night and may sit or stand, with great respect to the truth of Christ, yet, somehow, there is in your soul the thought: "Not quite yet. It is not time for me to become a Christian." I say to a boy: "Seek Christ." He says: "No; wait until I get to be a young man." I say to the young man: "Seek Christ." He says: "Wait until I come to mid-life." I meet the same person in mid-life, and I say: "Seek Christ." He says: "Wait until I get old." I meet the same person in old age, and say to him: "Seek Christ." He says: "Wait until I am on my dying bed." I am called to his dying couch. His last moments have come. I bend over the couch and listen for his last words. I have partially to guess what they are, by the motion of his lips, he is so feeble; but rallying himself, he whispers until I can hear him say: "I—am—waiting—for—a more—convenient—season"—and he is gone!

I can tell you when your convenient season will come. I can tell you the year—it will be 1874. I can tell you the month—it will be the month of March. I can tell you what kind of a day it will be—it will be the Sabbath-day. I can tell you what hour it will be—it will be between eight and ten o'clock. In other words, it is *now*—a word of three letters, but each one an anthem, or a jubilee, or a coronation, or a dungeon, or a groan. Do you ask me how I know this is your convenient season? I know it because you are here; and because the Holy Spirit is here; and because the elect sons and daughters of God in this church are praying for your redemption; and because the women of the church, last Thursday afternoon, especially implored the blessing of God upon the morning and evening services of to-day. I



know it because this matter was upon Friday evening at the prayer-meeting, and this morning in the prayer-meeting, and in the preceding prayer-meeting this evening. We prayed that God would come by His Holy Spirit and save your souls, and so I know this is your convenient season. I know it also from the fact that two great national funeral bells, one from the east and the other from the west, are tolling through all the valleys, and over all the mountains of the land—tolling, tolling: "Put not your trust in princes, neither in the son of man in whom there is no help; their breath goeth forth, in that very day their thoughts perish." Aye, I know it is your convenient season because some of you, like Felix, tremble as all your past life comes upon you with its sin, and all the future life comes upon you with its terror. This night air is a glare with torches to show you up or to show you down. It is rustling with wings to lift you into light or smite you into despair; and there is a rushing to and fro, and a shouting, and a wailing, and a leaping, and a falling, and a beating against the door of your soul as with a great thunder of emphasis, telling you: "Now, now is the best time, as it may be the only time."

My friends, be quick. You have no time to waste. Be quick, the days of your life are going. Be quick, the hour of your death is coming. Be quick, the time of grace has almost closed with some of you, perhaps, it may be closed with some of you to-night. Be quick, lest some paralysis seize upon you as upon our venerable ex-President, just carried out, or you have no more time than the illustrious senator who fell this week—only time to say, as he did, putting his hand upon his heart: "*Oh! oh!*" and you be gone!

May God Almighty forbid that any of you, my brethren or sisters, act the part of Felix and Drusilla, and put away this great subject. If you are going to be saved ever, why

not begin to-night? Throw down your sins and take the Lord's pardon. Christ has been tramping after you many a day.

An Indian and a white man became Christians. The Indian, almost as soon as he heard the Gospel, believed and was saved; but the white man struggled on in darkness for a long while before he found light. After their peace in Christ, the white man said to the Indian: "Why was it that I was kept so long in the darkness, and you immediately found peace?" The Indian replied: "I will tell you. A prince comes along and he offers you a coat. You look at your coat and you say: 'My coat is good enough,' and you refuse his offer; but the prince comes along and he offers me the coat, and I look at my old blanket and I throw that away, and take his offer. You, sir," continued the Indian, "are clinging to your own righteousness; you think you are good enough, and you keep your own righteousness; but I have nothing—nothing; and so when Jesus offers me pardon and peace, I simply take it." My hearer, why not now throw away the worn-out blanket of your sin, and take the robe of a Saviour's righteousness? a robe so white, so fair, so lustrous, that no fuller on earth can whiten it. Oh! Shepherd, to-night, bring home the lost sheep. Oh! Father, to-night give a welcoming kiss to the wan prodigal. Oh! friend of Lazarus, to-night break down the door of the sepulchre and say to all these dead souls, as by irresistible fiat: "*live! LIVE!*"

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# CESSATION OF EXPERIMENT.

## *A Story of Five Years.*

"Thou shalt see greater things than these."—*John i. 50.*

*r. Talmage's fifth anniversary—History of the Tabernacle—The Free Church system unanimously adopted—"Unchurchly" Architecture—Its success—Destruction of the old building—Christian sympathy—The new edifice—It is already too small—A Free Church adapted to all social requirements—Retrospective—God's goodness—Hope for the future, &c., &c.*

ON this, the fifth anniversary of my settlement as your pastor, I desire to tell the story of this church—a story that has never yet been told. I tell it in answer to American and European letters, so numerous that, with the aid of a secretary, I have not been able to answer them. I tell it in recognition of the goodness of God. I tell it out of justice to the men and women who sit before me; out of justice to some who have already entered upon the white-robed congregations of heaven. It is a story of escapes, deliverances, losses, self-sacrificing achievement, wild tragedy, divine help, and of world-wide sympathy, that I do not think belongs to any other church of the century. There are passages that remind me of the going of the Israelites through the Red Sea. And yet it shall not be an epic, nor a lyric, nor a dithyrambic, but only a plain pastoral.

Seated in my Philadelphia home, the "call" came from his church. The eldership deceived me in no wise. They told me it was almost an extinct church. Nineteen members were all that could be rallied to a congregational meeting, to make out the "call." It was accepted, for the reason that the church was flat down, and I said to myself: "That will be just the place in which to try, on a large scale, a free church, without any established hindrances in the way." And so, putting my trust in God, and confronting the derision of



some of my best personal friends at what they called a "wild undertaking," I came to this, the fairest city under the sun. Blessed be her churches! Prospered be her commerce! Christianized be all her schools!

#### THE FREE CHURCH PLAN ADOPTED.

The first summer, we enlarged the old chapel and multiplied the seating capacity in every possible way. According to the most approved style, our pew rents went up, and as the pew rents went up, my heart went down. The next Spring, the unanimous cry was for a new church, and the trustees assembled to decide what it should be. With a suppressed excitement, such as I never before or since felt, I went into a neighbour's parlour, to lay before the trustees the plan of a free church. I tried to show them, in that conversation, that it is ungodly and unchristian to make a man's financial qualification the test of pew-holding, and to show them that we had no right to knock down, under an auctioneer's hammer, to the highest bidder, a man's chances for heaven. There was a long pause. After awhile, one of the brethren remarked: "I have no doubt that a church on that plan would be the highest style of Gospel church; but where would we get the money to carry on such a project?" I replied: "Put your trust in God, and depend upon the voluntary subscriptions of the people. And since my own salary may be in the way, I now, here, and for all time to come, discharge you of all financial responsibility to me, personally. Give me a free church, and if you cannot support me, then by pen and lecturing platform, I will take care of myself." "Well," said one of the brethren, "if the dominie believes in the plan as much as that, I think we can afford to believe in it, and I move we have a free church;" —a resolution that passed with a unanimous "Aye."

Then there came around about me a band of consecrated men

women, sworn to do this work, and if I ever forget their  
y to Christ, and their adherence to the good cause,  
ny tongue be for ever still! The first question was to  
a site for the building. Committees were appointed,  
went up and down the city, looking for a place, they  
g decided that we must have a place one hundred and  
feet front, by one hundred feet deep; and after weeks  
arching, they found, within three doors of the old  
l, just the place—one hundred and fifty feet front, by  
undred feet. Although the lot is larger now than it  
hen, that was the size of it then—fore-ordained, from  
ernity, to be the place where we should build. I was  
asked, and I asked myself: "Why wasn't that lot  
?" God was keeping it for us.

#### "UNCHURCHLY" ARCHITECTURE.

e next question to be decided was, Who shall be the  
tect? I went to one of the prominent architects in  
York, and said: "Give us a church in amphitheatrical  
." He figured on it a few weeks, and said: "An  
itheatrical building is not *churchly*." I went to another  
guished architect, and said: "Give us an amphithea-  
building where the people can see each other's faces,  
ad of the back of the head, and where we can all be  
red as in a great home-circle, and where nothing shall  
gular." He figured on it a while, and at the end of  
weeks said to me that an amphitheatrical building would  
e *churchly*. One day a young man came into my room,  
said: "Have you decided upon an architect for the build-  
" I replied: "No." Said he: "Would I have any  
ce?" I replied: "Any man, young or old, who can  
us an amphitheatrical church where the people can all  
ated in sympathy with each other, will be our architect."  
I drew out, on the back of a letter, in twenty strokes,

the general idea, and said : " If you can bring that out with architectural skill, you will be our man." So this plan was developed. That it was a good one, I take from the fact that there have been scores of churches since built on the same plan.

Then the trowel began to click, and the hammer to thump, and the building rose. As we were to build it for a temporary structure, to last but two years, in three months the whole affair was done; but mark you, without having raised one dollar of contribution towards it. We depended upon the sale of the old church for the building of the new; but the purchasers of that building failed to meet their payments, and so the building came back upon our hands. Then, after the new building was done, we had to go through the work of attempting to pay for a church entirely completed, and some of you may know what tough work that is. Then we went on organizing—making hundreds of experiments in hundreds of things, because we had no precedent, no antecedent. Yet the work all the time progressed. At our very first communion in the old Tabernacle, more than ninety souls professed faith in Christ; at the second communion in the old Tabernacle, more than fifty souls; at the third communion in the old Tabernacle, more than forty souls; and that is the only way I know how to calculate the advancement of a church. Though you build a church as grand as St. Paul's, of London; and have a line of carriages, with rosetted coachmen, reaching from here to Prospect Park, I would abhor it if there were no conversions. That church is an accursed thing which knows nothing about soul-saving. Pull it down, and use its timbers and its stones for bowling-alleys and theatres. They are not so objectionable, because they pretend to be what they are; but a church which does nothing but rock souls into an eternal sleep under a gilded canopy, is a gigantic hypocrisy, and defies the bolts of high heaven.

, the work went on. On the following summer we had our Tabernacle was too straight for us, and so we did it at an expense like building another new church. While, our church had sailed down into calm financial and one December night the trustees of the church led to look over the affairs of the church, and they added the income and the outgo, and saw that the next day would have a positive surplus. They clapped hands and sat up very late that night talking the matter over, and they said: "This project of a free church, some have caricatured and many have doubted, has to be a success." It was about eleven o'clock at night when the sexton shut the door of the old Iron-Clad. That was

#### THE LAST NIGHT OF THE TABERNACLE.

ark would never float any more souls into glory. Its task was done. And if, when a Christian man dies, the air is full of spirits coming and going, when a Christian Church is about to come to its closing moments, I think that angelic hosts move forward and backward in the scene. I think the air was full of them.

The next morning, at ten o'clock, the cry of fire was heard. It was not a hoarse uproar, but it was a voice with power. I said to a man the other day: "When did you become a Christian?" He replied: "When the old Tabernacle burned. I don't cry often, I want you to understand, I cried that morning, and I cried all day. Wasn't it so?" Oh Lord Jesus! great Head of the Church! what a night that was when Thy children stood before their burning temple. Some sighed. Some wrung their hands. Some wept. Invalids with unnatural strength got up from their couches and looked out at it. It was the death throes of the church, its departing spirit spreading abroad wings of

flame—its groan, the falling timbers. Let the fireman take off their glazed hats, and twenty thousand excited spectators bow down before the catafalque of fire. Dead ! Dead ! Ashes to ashes !

The loss was the more complete because it was an iron structure, on which we had not been able to get adequate insurance. So we were as thoroughly rubbed out as a sponge rubs out a sum from a boy's slate at school. Then there came sympathetic letters. I never got so many letters in one day in my life, as I got on the following day. And then there came practical help. One thousand dollars from Dresden, Germany, where they make pictures. Help from Sheffield, England, where they make knives ; from Glasgow, Scotland, where they make steamers ; from Edinburgh, where they make scholars ; from Paris, where they make revolutions ; from London, where they make everything. It was not so much the amount they gave as the way they gave it. They said

#### THEY HAD SEEN THE FIRE

in Yorkshire and in old Essex, and among the Trossachs. They told us we were prayed for among the Manchester and Birmingham operatives. You know how it was in our own city. Twenty-six churches in as many hours were offered for our occupation. They offered us their main audience-rooms, they offered us their lecture-rooms, they offered us their baptistries and their anxious seats, and what they did not offer us would not be worth mentioning. The demonstration of Christian brotherhood was so magnificent that as soon as I could get the cinders and the tears wiped out of my eyes, I said : " Well brethren, I am glad the thing has burned up. We only built it for two years, anyhow, and it was not large enough. Now let us rise up and have a larger and a better structure."

make the years of our exile the more bearable, the God came down with His Spirit in the Academy of . Some people said: "You had better not go there, it theatre—a secular place." But we went there and had it ted. We dedicated the director's room in that build- a prayer-meeting twice every Sabbath. We dedicated "Green Room" by cries of "What must I do to be ?" We dedicated the platform by the story of a r's love, and never anything else but that, morning ight. We dedicated the boxes by men and women who skin for prayers. We dedicated the main audience- by five hundred and thirteen souls professing to have the peace of the Gospel—three hundred and seven of connecting themselves with our Church, the others elsewhere because we had as yet no home. And though Academy of Music may be the scene of secular enter- ents for many a year, there shall be no power in the of *prima donna*, or in the blast of brazen instruments, to out "St. Martin's" and "Coronation" still rolling g those arches.

anwhile, we selected a new architect, one who did not that an amphitheatrical building would be unchurchly; rho, after long experience in putting up some of the it structures in England and the United States, brought : achievements to a culmination in plans for this temple. rome—the Lord has written the record on high: I t read it until I come up there—the women, by fair y personal solicitation, raised money. The Board of ees brooded, after many a midnight, over the plans. work went on—by what toil, by what hope deferred, by anxiety, I cannot tell—until, on the 22nd of February, il was drawn from our eyes, and there rose before our this building, grander than our brightest anticipations, g as the everlasting hills, and beautiful as a midsummer's

dream! offering seating capacity to several thousand more than any Protestant church in America.

There remained but two things to be tested: Can we pay for it? will it be occupied? The first question you answered when, on the opening day, you put in the Lord's lap thirty-five thousand dollars, making a record for yourselves which, while it has won the admiration of Christendom, will be a page you will be glad of in the great day when Christ shall say: "Well done, good and faithful servant! Thou hast been faithful over a few things; be thou ruler over ten cities." The other question was: Will all the pews be assigned? For, mind you, though we are a free church, we are neither a mob or a rabble. Though the pews are all free from taxation, yet they are formally assigned, that every father and mother may have their family between them; that this Sabbath they may sit where they sat last Sabbath, and next Sabbath where they sat this Sabbath; that a home feeling may be cultured; that the church may be organized, disciplined for practical Christian work, as it could not be if the pews were not assigned. We built the church so large, that trustees said, and I said, that if in one or two years we can assign all these pews to families, we shall be satisfied. The church has been open only about six weeks, yet two weeks ago we completed the assignment of all the pews—a work that would have been done the night of the opening if there had been time; and so we find that, instead of the building being too large,

IT IS ALREADY TOO SMALL.

Now, if this church shall ever doubt God's goodness, or his willingness to take us straight through any righteous undertaking, then we deserve to have this building go down into the ashes of a ruin from which it shall never be resurrected, or swallowed of an earthquake that leaves not one

shingle behind. "Oh! give thanks unto the Lord  
oodness, for his mercy endureth for ever." "Not  
not unto us, O Lord! but unto Thy name be the  
If God ever defended a church, if God ever lead a  
f God ever blessed a church, if God ever saved a  
this is the church.

ow, I demand of all those who are here to-day, and  
se to whom these words shall come, that they take  
church out of the list of experiments, and put it  
the list of accomplished facts. There are two or  
ngs we have proved.

first place, we have proved that a *free church is a possibility*. The reason that like undertakings, in  
es, have failed, has been because they have been  
ll scale, or because they have been in a mean struc-  
because with it they have poor singing, or in a  
neighbourhood. Give a free church a fair chance,  
ight kind of a neighbourhood, and you shall gather  
s walls all classes—the rich and the poor, the cul-  
id the ignorant. Just the kind of a church our  
sus would favour: "The rich and the poor meeting  
the Lord the maker of them all." Do you know  
t nine-tenths of the pew-renting churches in this  
at the end of the year, depend upon a few rich men  
and put their hands in their pockets, up to the  
meet the deficit? Now, I contend that that is not  
to do. Throw the whole responsibility on the  
and they will meet it. They love to be trusted.  
re ever a grander illustration of the willingness of  
le of this country to support a free church, than on  
of February? Mind you, it was in the midst of  
ancial depression. Mind you, it was like the build-  
hree churches in three years—the first Tabernacle  
1871, the enlargement of that structure (which was



almost like erecting another building, for expense) in 1872, then this structure in the early part of 1874. Do you believe that a society conducted on any other principle could have roused up enough sympathy to be able to build three churches in a little over three years? I trow not.

Oh! we were tempted, again, and again, to go back to the old plan. I was offered, as some of you know, twenty thousand dollars per year salary if I would allow or consent to the selling of the pews in the old Tabernacle; but we have consecrated ourselves to the work of building a free church and we do not want any rest from it until we rest in Greenwood, the pleasant bed where I have a great many good friends sleeping this morning.

#### A FREE CHURCH ADAPTED TO ALL.

We proved another thing, and that is, a *free church can be made attractive to the refined and the cultured*. The stereotype objection, all over the world, to a free church, has been "You break down the barriers of society, and then the cultured and the refined won't come into such a place." We have put the falsehood upon that objection to a free church. There is not anywhere—there is not in any church in this land, or in England, more educated men and women, more professional men, more lawyers, doctors, artists, teachers, more men who can make an intelligent public address upon every question of finance, politics, morals, and religion, than that when a man introduces his family in this Christian association, he introduces them into the highest style of refinement. I have wandered up and down the world, and suppose I have seen as much of it as any man of my age and I now say that it is my highest ambition to have my own children worthy of the Christian, elevated society in which we have here introduced them.

Again: we have proved that *the people will come to receive*

*a liberal and unvarnished Gospel.* The impression is abroad that you must fix up the Gospel to suit the age, instead of fixing up the age to suit the Gospel; and the young men coming out of our theological seminaries have the impression that they must palliate the prejudices of society, and must cover over the natural rottenness of the human heart, and that they must tell men what very clever people they are, and that they only need to be pressed in a little one way, and pulled out a little the other way, and then they will be all right. And they say: "All you want is development." Is it? Development! You might as well go to a man bent double with the cramps of Asiatic cholera, and tell him that all he wants is development. It is a lie. He needs to have his disease killed so that he may get well. Until our heart is changed by the grace of God, it is scabbed and ulcerous with a great leprosy; and it is not development we want, but it is the cure of an eating, loathsome, blasting, damning leprosy. Our whole nature throughout, and throughout, and throughout wrong, needs to be made over, and over, and over again. I wish that every word of that passage could come down with five tons' weight of emphasis: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," though he had given a hundred thousand dollars to religious institutions, though he never used a bad word in his life, though he paid all his debts, though he lived on the tip-top round of respectability—"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." But so little do we hear about this doctrine of regeneration in this day, that it is almost considered indelicate for a man to read in a public assemblage the words of Christ to Nicodemus about the new birth. And as to there being any hell, if we make any illusion to that, it must be with exquisite circumlocution, as 'the place of high temperature,' or "the world insalubrious," or, as a minister recently called it, "the great elsewhere!" I

say to the young men who are studying for the ministry, and there are thirty connected with this congregation, if you have any idea that it is necessary to preach an emasculated Gospel in order to get people to come and hear it, you make a vast mistake. An eminent minister of New York, said to me some time ago: "I have a very large audience, but they are all Christians. I can't get the worldly people to come in and listen to me. I hear that a good many worldly people come to hear you. You must preach some very strange things. What did you preach about yesterday?" "Well," I replied, "I preached yesterday morning on: 'Seek ye the Lord while He may be found;' and in the evening, I preached about: 'Strive to enter in at the straight gate.'" Said he: "Is that all?" "Yes," I replied, "that is all." Oh! my friends, there is

A JUDGMENT-SEAT IN EVERY MAN'S HEART,

which tells him that the Bible is true, and that, if it be true, the wicked and the righteous cannot go to the same place. So I say: "Young men who are entering the ministry, if you really want a fresh theme, if you really want a novel theme to preach about, preach the old Gospel. Do not preach about "development"—that is hackneyed. Do not preach about the Darwinian Theory of the Origin of our Race—that is worn out. But if you want something new, really new, new that tens of thousands of people in this day do not know anything about it, then give them "Repentance" in the morning, and "Faith" at night; and in order to variety, next Sabbath give them "Faith" in the morning, and "Repentance" at night.

I believe that within the next twenty years there will be an earthquake amid the American and English pulpits, and that those which have adhered to the old Gospel will stand, and that those which have preached anything else will go

down. Paul cries out with great emphasis: "If anyone, though he be an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel, let him be accursed."

Where is Theodore Parker's pulpit to-day? He was the most fascinating man I ever heard—a mighty man; but he denied the Divinity of Christ and denied the inspiration of the Scriptures. Where is his pulpit to-day? Boston tried to patch it up, and prop it up, but when Theodore Parker died, his pulpit died with him. Where is the pulpit of Edward Irving, the most brilliant man that ever stood in the pulpit of England? He forsook the simplicity of his father's faith, and when Edward Irving died, his pulpit died with him. But while those men were preaching, each in his day, the one in Boston and the other in London, there were self-sacrificing men in our Western wilderness preaching Jesus and the resurrection. They died of the malaria from the cane-breaks; but what became of their pulpit? It multiplied into five thousand other pulpits, and the song for which Bishop Ashbury and George Reynolds, and Jacob Kruber, gave the pitch, is still humming amid the beech woods beyond the bluffs of the Mississippi.

Now, this church has been gathered and built as an exponent of a literal Gospel. So it shall stand. That the Lord has approved our plan in the past, I have only to state that eight hundred and ninety-two souls have connected themselves with this Church through these five years, while by letters from all parts of this land, and from England, Scotland, and Ireland, and Australia, and the islands of the sea, we have an intimation that through your prayers and the help that you have been able to give your pastor, thousands of souls have been brought into the kingdom of Christ. The old Gospel is the power of God and the wisdom of God unto salvation.

## RETROSPECTIVE.

But now, five years are gone. God has closed the fifth volume, never to be opened until the fiery fingers of the judgment shall open it, amid a flying heavens and a burning earth. During those five years a good many have gone out from us into the eternal world. Some of them, I fear, went unprepared. It is absurd for a man to preach a sermon in which he implies that all the dead are happy. Some of those who went out from us during the past five years into the eternal world, gave no evidence of repentance. There was, in their last struggle, a look of terror about the face that I did not like. They mentioned, in their last moments, the name of father, or mother, or wife, or child, but they did not mention the name of Jesus.

"Jesus, the name high over all  
In hell, and earth, and sky."

They did not speak of Him. I could not sleep nights, asking myself the question: "Was it my fault? Did I give them fair warning?" "God have mercy upon their soul," would be an appropriate prayer, this morning—if it were not too late!

But oh, how many of our friends, during these five years, have gone away in Christian peacefulness. The evening came on them with the soft step of the dew. There was sobbing in the room, and there were wailings that made the heart ache, and cries of "What will we do without father?" "How lonely the world will be without mother." "Speak, my darling, once more! Do you know me? Say, my child, do you know me?" Ah, no wonder they made no response. How could they take your hand when Christ had it in both of his? How could they hear your voice when the heavenly escort, come to fetch them home, were in full chant? How could they see you in the turned-down light of the sick room, when the morning of heaven was surging in upon their soul

at full tide? See! See! there are angels in the room. Oh, those dying looks, those enchanted faces, those closing expostulations! If I could, this morning, bring those five years of Christian death-bed triumphs before you, you would spring to your feet shouting the glory; and those radiant ones who have gone up from your homes would seem moving up and down again through these very aisles, and you would see their brows garlanded with joy, and their necks jewelled with light; and, as they looked upon you, their countenances sympathetic for your loneliness, you would want to die, too, so as to be with them. Do not cry! Do not cry! Parents, you will get back your child. Sorrowful orphans, you will see father again. You will see mother again. God will wipe away all tears from your eyes.

During these five years, thirty-two of our members have gone out of life, and they all went away in the sunrise. Blessed be God! I knew them here, and I will know them better there.

And now, as a church, we put out into a future unknown, so far as particulars are concerned; but we know one thing about it: "Thou shalt see greater things than these." We have only just built the fort out of which we are going to fire upon the Lord's enemies. We have only just planted the stake on the beach from which we are going to swing out in the offing the Gospel net. We really believe that, where we have had hundreds brought to God, we will have thousands. We mean to pray the church through. To God be the glory for the past. In God is our hope for the future. You and I may die—that will not have anything to do with the cause. The cause will go on. The sorrowful will be comforted. The tempted will be delivered. The dead will be raised. There are going to be larger harvest-homes, and stronger doxologies, and more jubilant hallelujahs.

Oh, men and women, impenitent, committed to my charge,

how can I give you up? If there be any power in prayer, in tears, in heart-breaking solicitations, you must come in. Oh, fire-crowned Sinai! unlimber now thy batteries! Oh, quaking Calvary, now plead thy love! Oh, day of judgment, now unsheathe thy glory! Oh, heaven, display thy thrones! Oh, pit, flash forth thy terrors! And, amid the rising, and the falling, and the quaking, and the wailing, and the shouting, and the praying, as one billow of an aroused sea has been known to pitch a steamer with a thousand passengers high and dry upon the beach, so now this moment, with one great surge of penitence and prayer, let all this audience be landed on the shore of eternal safety.

#### CONCLUSION.

My heart overflows with emotion, when I think that I have another pastoral year less of work to do. I am not tired. God has been very good to me all these years. Notwithstanding the work I have been called to do here in this Church, and in the Lay College, and in the editorial chair, a combined work that many supposed and prophesied would crush me, I have never had a day of real sickness in my life, and a headache is to me unknown, save as some of my good friends with their hands on their hot temples, have described it. God has been very good to me. I ascribe this health and prosperity first to God and then to the two facts that I have a very good home, and a congregation who give no annoyance. They are in sympathy with me and my work. If any of them do not like me, I have been too stupid to find it out. I thank you for all your forbearances towards me. I thank you for all the generosity with which you have met my worldly necessities. Above all, I thank you for the prayers that in public and private you have offered for me and mine. I hope to live and die with you. It is my highest ambition to be your servant for Jesus' sake. And when it is time for

rest, then I want to be carried out through these very streets by the men who sit before me to-day. Their arms are good and strong, and they will know how to let me lie down into the last sleep. Many of them are my friends in the Gospel. They were good to me while I lived.

I would not be afraid to trust myself in their arms if I am dead. And then one by one, you will come out to me from the silent neighbourhood, and when the morning of the resurrection dawns, in its holy light we will wake up together, as I cry: "Are you all here?" you will know my voice, you have heard it so long, and you will answer: "All here."

believe in the communion of saints, and in the life everlasting, Amen."

## ZIKLAG IN ASHES.

BY REV. T. DE WITT TALMAGE, D.D.

When David and the people that were with him lifted up their voices and wept, until they had no more power to weep. David recovered all. His part is that he goeth down into the battle, so shall his part be that he live by the stuff."—*I. Samuel xxx. 4, 19, 24.*

HERE is intense excitement in the village of Ziklag.

David and his men are bidding good-bye to their friends and are off for the wars. In that little village of Ziklag, the defenceless ones will be safe until the warriors, armed with victory, come home. But will the defenceless be safe? The soft arms of children are around the necks of the bronzed warriors until they shake themselves free and start; and handkerchiefs and flags are waved, and kisses are thrown, until the armed men vanish beyond the hills. David and his men soon get through with their campaign, and start homeward. Every night on their way home, no



sooner does the soldier put his head on the knapsack, than in his dream he hears the welcome of the wife and the shout of the child. Oh, what long stories they will have to tell their families, of how they dodged the battle-axe, and then will roll up their sleeve and show the half-healed wound. With glad, quick step, they march on, David and his men for they are marching home. Now, they come up to the last hill which overlooks Ziklag, and they expect in a moment to see the dwelling-places of their beloved ones. They look, and as they look, their cheek turns pale, and their lip quivers, and their hand involuntarily comes down on the hilt of the sword. "Where is Ziklag? Where are our homes?" they cry. Alas! the curling smoke above the ruin tells the tragedy. The Amalekites have come down and consumed the village, and carried the mothers, and the wives, and the children of David and his men into captivity. The swarthy warriors stand for a few moments

#### TRANSFIXED WITH HORROR.

Then their eyes glance to each other, and they burst into uncontrollable weeping, for when a strong warrior weeps, the grief is appalling. It seems as if the emotion might tear him to pieces. "They wept until they had no more power to weep." But soon their sorrow turns into rage, and David, swinging his sword high in the air, cries: "Pursue, for thou shalt overtake them and without fail recover all. Pursue!" Now, the march becomes a "double quick." Two hundred of David's men stop by the brook Besor, faint with fatigue and grief. They cannot go a step farther. They are left there. But the other four hundred men under David, with a sort of panther step, march on in sorrow and in rage. They find by the side of the road a half-dead Egyptian, and they resuscitate him and compel him to tell the whole story. He says: "Yonder they went, the captors and the captives,"

pointing in the direction. Forward, ye four hundred brave men of fire! Very soon David and his enraged company came upon the Amalekitish host. Yonder they see their own wives, and children, and mothers, and under Amalekitish guard. Here are officers of the Amalekitish army holding a banquet. The cups are full, the music is roused, the dance begins. The Amalekitish host cheer, and cheer, and cheer over their victory. But without note of bugle, or warning of trumpet, David and his four hundred men burst upon the scene, suddenly as Robert Bruce hurled his Scotchmen upon the revellers at Bannockburn. David and his men look up, and one glance at their loved ones in captivity and under Amalekitish guard, throws them into a very fury of determination; for you know how men will fight when they fight for their wives and children. Ah, there are lightnings in their eye, and every finger is a spear, and their voice is like the shout of the whirlwind. Amid the upset tankards, and the costly viands crushed under foot, the wounded Amalekites lie (their blood mingling with their wine), shrieking for mercy. No sooner do David and his men win the victory, than they throw their swords down into the dust—what do they want with their swords now?—and the broken families come together amid a great shout of joy that makes the parting scene in Ziklag seem very insipid in the comparison. The rough old warrior has to use some persuasion before he can get his child to come to him now, after so long an absence; but soon the little finger traces the familiar wrinkle across the scarred face. And then the empty tankards are set up, and they are filled with the best wine from the hills, and David and his men, the husbands, the wives, the brothers, the sisters, drink to the overthrow of the Amalekites and to the rebuilding of Ziklag. So, oh Lord, let thine enemies perish!

Now they are coming home—David, and his men, and their

families—a long procession. Men, women, and children, loaded with jewels, and robes, and with all kinds of trophies that the Amalekites had gathered up in years of conquests—everything now in the hands of David and his men. When they come by the brook Besor, where are the men sick and incompetent to travel, the jewels, and the robes, and all kinds of treasures are divided among the sick, as well as among the well. Surely, the lame and exhausted ought to have some of the treasures. Here is a robe for this pale-faced warrior. Here is a pillow for this dying man. Here is a handful of gold for the wasted trumpeter. I really think that these men who fainted by the brook Besor may have endured as much as those men who went into the battle. Some mean fellows objected to the sick ones having any of the spoils. The objectors said: "These men did not fight." David, with a magnanimous heart, replies: "As his part is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his part be that tarrieth by the stuff."

This subject is practically suggestive to me. Thank God, in these times, a man can go off on a journey and be gone weeks and months, and come back and see his house untouched of incendiary, and have his family on the step to greet him, if, by telegram, he has foretold the moment of his coming. But there are Amalekitish disasters, and there are Amalekitish diseases, that sometimes come down upon one's home, making as devastating work as the day when Ziklag took fire. There are families in my congregation whose homes have been broken up. No battering-ram smote in the door, no iconoclast crumbled the statues, no flame leaped amid the curtains; but so far as all the joy and merriment that once belonged to that house are concerned, the home has departed. Armed diseases came down upon the quietness of the scene—scarlet fevers, or pleurisies, or consumptions, or undefined disorders came and seized upon some

members of that family, and carried them away. Ziklag in ashes! And you go about, sometimes weeping and sometimes enraged, wanting to get back your loved ones as much as David and his men wanted to reconstruct their despoiled households. Ziklag in ashes! Some of you went off from home. You counted the days of your absence. Every day seemed as long as a week. Oh! how glad you were when the time came for you to go aboard the steamboat or rail-car and start for home! You arrived. You went up the street where your dwelling was, and in the night you put your hand on the door-bell, and behold! it was wrapped with the signal of bereavement, and you found that Amaleutish Death, that had devastated a thousand other households, had blasted yours. You go about weeping amid the desolation of your once happy home, thinking of the bright eyes closed, and the noble hearts stopped, and the gentle hands folded, and you weep until you have no more power to weep. Ziklag in ashes!

A gentleman went to a friend of mine in the city of Washington, and asked that through him he might get a consulship to some foreign port. My friend said to him: "What do you want to go away from your beautiful home for, into a foreign port?" "Oh!" he replied: "my home is gone. My six children are dead. I must get away, sir. I can't stand it in this country any longer." Ziklag in ashes!

#### WHY THESE LONG SHADOWS

of bereavement across this audience? Why is it that in almost every assemblage black is the predominant colour of the apparel? Is it because you do not like saffron, or brown, or violet? Oh! no. You say: "The world is not so bright to us as once it was:" and there is a story of silent voices, and of still feet, and of loved ones gone; and when you look over

the hills, expecting only beauty and loveliness, you find only devastation and woe. Ziklag in ashes!

Last Wednesday week, in Ulster County, New York, the village church was decorated until the fragrance of the flowers was almost bewildering. The maidens of the village had emptied the place of flowers upon one marriage altar. One of their own number was affianced to a minister of Christ, who had come to take her to his own home. With hands joined, amid a congratulatory audience, the vows were taken. In three days from that time, one of those who stood at the altar exchanged earth for heaven. The wedding march broke down into the funeral dirge. There were not enough flowers now for the coffin-lid, because they had all been taken for the bridal hour. The dead minister of Christ is brought to another village. He had gone out from them less than a week before, in his strength; now he comes home lifeless. The whole church bewailed him. The solemn procession moved around to look upon the still face that once had beamed with messages of salvation. Little children were lifted up to look at him. And some of those whom he had comforted in days of sorrow, when they passed that silent form, made the place dreadful with their weeping. Another village emptied of its flowers—some of them put in the shape of a cross to symbolize his hope, others put in the shape of a crown to symbolize his triumph. A hundred lights blown out in one strong gust from the open door of a sepulchre. Ziklag in ashes!

I preach this sermon to-day because I want to rally you as David rallied his men for the recovery of the loved and the lost. I want not only to win heaven, but I want all this congregation to go along with me. I feel that somehow I have a responsibility in your arriving at that great city. I have on other Sabbaths used other inducements. I mean to-day, for the sake of variety, hoping to reach your heart, to

ry another kind of inducement. Do you really want to join the companionship of your loved ones who have gone? Are you as anxious to join them as David and his men were to join their families? Then I am here, in the name of God, to say that you may, and to tell you how.

I remark, in the first place, if you want to join your loved ones in glory, you must travel the same way they went. No sooner had the half-dead Egyptian been resuscitated than he pointed the way the captors and the captives had gone, and David and his men followed after. So our Christian friends have gone into another country; and, if we want to reach their companionship,

WE MUST TAKE THE SAME ROAD.

They repented; we must repent. They prayed; we must pray. They trusted in Christ; we must trust in Christ. They lived a religious life; we must live a religious life. They were very much like ourselves. I know now that they are gone—there is a halo around their names; but they had their faults. They said and did things they ought never to have said or done. They were sometimes rebellious, sometimes cast down. They were far from being perfect. So I suppose that when we have gone, some things in us that are now only tolerable may be almost resplendent. But as they were like us in deficiencies, we ought to be like them in taking a supernal Christ to make up the deficits. Had it not been for Jesus, they would have all perished; but Christ comforted them and said: "I am the way," and they took it.

I have also to say to you that the path that these captives trod was a troubled path, and that David and his men had to go over the same difficult way. While these captives were being taken off, they said: "Oh, we are so tired; we are so sick; we are so hungry;" but the men who had charge of them, said: "Stop this crying. Go on!" David and his

men also found it a hard way. They were already almost dead with marching, and yet they had to go up the same way. Our friends have gone into glory, and it is through much tribulation that we are to enter into the kingdom. How our loved ones used to have to struggle, how their old hearts ached, how sometimes they had a tusale for bread. In our childhood we wondered why there were so many wrinkles on their faces. We did not know that what were called "crows' feet" on their faces were the marks of the black raven of trouble. Did you never hear the old people, seated by the evening stand, talk over their early trials, their hardships, the accidents, the burials, the disappointments, the empty flour barrel, when there were so many hungry ones to feed, the sickness almost unto death when the next dose of morphine decided between ghastly bereavement and an unbroken home-circle? Oh yes, it was trouble that whitened their hair, it was trouble that shook the cup in their hands, it was trouble that washed the lustre from their eyes with the rain of tears until they needed spectacles. It was trouble that made the care a necessity for their journey. Do you never remember seeing your old mother sitting, on some rainy day, looking out of the window, her elbow on the window-sill, her hand to her brow, looking out, not seeing the falling shower at all (you well know she was looking into the distant past) until the apron came up to her eyes because the memory was too much for her?

"Oft the big unbidden tear,  
Stealing down the furrowed cheek,  
Told in eloquence sincere  
Tales of woe that could not speak.

"But the scene of weeping o'er,  
Past the scene of toil and pain;  
They shall feel distress no more,  
Never, never weep again."

Who are these under the altar?" The question was asked and the response came: "These are they who came out of great tribulations, and had their robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb." Our friends went by a path of tears into glory. Be not surprised if we have to travel the same pathway.

Let me remark again: If we want to win the society of our friends in heaven, we will not only have to travel a path of tribulation, but we will also have to positively battle for their companionship. David and his men never wanted iron swords, and invulnerable shields, and thick breastplates so much as they wanted them on the day when they lay down upon the Amalekites. If they had lost that battle, they never would have got their families back. I suppose that one glance of their loved ones in captivity led them into the battle with twofold courage and energy. They said: "We must win it. Everything depends on it. Let each one take a man on point of spear or sword. We must win it." And I have to tell you, that between us and coming into the companionship of our loved ones who are departed, there is an Austerlitz, there is a Cullinstown, there is a Balaclava, there is a Tysburgh, there is a Waterloo. War with the world, war with the flesh, war with the devil. We have either to conquer our troubles, or our troubles will conquer us. David either slay the Amalekites, or the Amalekites will slay him. And yet, is not the fort to be taken worth all the pain, all the peril, all the besiegement. Look! Who are they on the bright hills of heaven, yonder? There they are! those who sat at your own table, the chair now vacant.

#### THERE THEY ARE!

Those whom you rocked in infancy in the cradle, or hushed to sleep in your arms. There they are! Those in whose life your life was bound up. There they are, their brow more



radiant than ever before you saw it; their lips waiting for the kiss of heavenly greeting; their cheek roseate with the health of eternal summer; their hands beckoning you up the steep; their feet bounding with the mirth of heaven; the pallor of their last sickness gone out of their face—never more to be sick, never more to cough, never more to limp, never more to be old, never more to weep. They are watching from those heights to see if through Christ you can take that port, and whether you will rush in upon them, victors. They know that upon this battle depends whether you will ever join their society. Up! Strike harder! Charge more bravely! Remember that every inch you gain puts you so much further on towards that heavenly re-union.

If this morning, while I speak, you could hear the cannonade of a foreign navy coming through the "Narrows," which was to despoil our city, and if they really should succeed in carrying our families away from us, how long would we take before we resolved to go after them? Every weapon, whether fresh from Springfield, or old and rusty in the garret, would be brought out, and we would urge on, and coming in front of the foe, we would look at them, and then look at our families, and the cry would be: "Victory or death;" and when the ammunition was gone, we would take the captors on the point of the bayonet or under the breach of the gun. If you would make such a struggle in the getting back of our earthly friends, will you not make as much struggle for the gaining of the eternal companionship of your heavenly friends? Oh, yes, we must join them. We must sit in their holy society. We must sing with them the song. We must celebrate with them the triumph. Let it never be told on earth or in heaven that David and his men pushed out with braver hearts for the getting back of their earthly friends, for a few years on earth, than we to get our departed.

ou say that all this implies that our departed  
 stian friends are alive. Why had you any idea they  
 dead? They have only moved. If you should  
 n the 2nd of May to a house where one of your friends  
 l, and found them gone, you would not think that he was  
 l. The secret is, that they are richer now than they once  
 e, and can afford a better residence. They once drank  
 of earthenware, they now drink from the king's chalice.  
 xeph is yet alive," and Jacob will go up and see him.  
 ing! are they? Why, if a man can live in the damp,  
 k dungeon of earthly captivity, can he not live where he  
 the atmosphere of the mountains of heaven? Oh,  
 they are living.

#### THE TRUE LIFE BEGINS IN HEAVEN.

o you think that Paul is so near dead now as he was  
 n he was living in the Roman dungeon? Do you think  
 Frederick Robertson, of Brighton, is as near dead now  
 hen, year after year, he slept seated on the floor, his  
 l on the bottom of a chair, because he could find ease in  
 other posture? Do you think that Robert Hall is as  
 dead now as when on his couch he tossed in physical  
 ies? No. Death gave them the few black drops that  
 d them. That is all death does to a Christian—cures  
 . I know that what I have said implies that they are  
 g. There is no question about that. The only question  
 morning is whether you will ever join them.  
 ut I must not forget those two hundred men who fainted  
 he brook Besor. They could not take another step fur-  
 . Their feet were sore. Their head ached. Their entire  
 re was exhausted. Besides that, they were broken-  
 rted because their homes were gone. Ziklag in ashes!  
 l yet, David, when he comes up to them, divides the  
 l among them. He says they shall have some of the

jewels, some of the robes, some of the treasures. I look over this audience this morning, and I find at least two hundred who have fainted by the brook Besor—the brook of tears. You feel as if you could not take another step further, as though you could never look up again. But I am going to imitate David, and divide among you some glorious trophies. Here is a robe: "All things work together for good to those who love God." Wrap yourself in that glorious promise. Here is for your neck a string of pearls made out of crystalized tears: "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Here is a coronet: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." O ye fainting ones by the brook Besor, dip your blistered feet in the running stream of God's mercy. Bathe your brow at the wells of salvation. Soothe your wounds with the balsam that exudes from the trees of life. God will not utterly cast you off, O broken-hearted man, O broken-hearted woman, fainting by the brook Besor!

A shepherd finds that his musical pipe is bruised. He says: "I can't get any more music out of this instrument, I will just break it; I will throw this reed away; then I will get another reed and I will play music on that." But God says He will not cast you off because all the music has gone out of your soul: "The bruised reed he will not break." As far as I can tell the diagnosis of your disease, you want Divine nursing, and it is promised you: "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." God will see you all the way through, oh, troubled soul; and when you come down to the Jordan of death, you will find it to be as thin a brook as Besor; for Dr. Robinson says, that, in April, Besor dries up, and there is no brook at all. And, in your last moment, you will be as placid as the Kentucky minister, who recently went up to God, saying, in the dying hour: "Write to my sister, Kate, and tell her not to be worried

rightened about the story of the horrors around the bed. Tell her there is not a word of truth in it, for I am here now, and Jesus is with me, and I find it a very easy way. Not because I am a good man, for I am not; I am nothing but a poor, miserable sinner; but I have an almighty Saviour, and both of his arms are around me." "O God Almighty, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, bring us into the companionship of our loved ones who have already entered the heavenly land, and into the presence of Christ, whom, not having seen, we love. And David shall recover all, and as his part is that goeth into the battle, so his part shall be that tarrieth by the camp." "uff."

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## ON THE FENCE IN RELIGIOUS MATTERS.

How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him."—1 Kings xviii. 21.

ELIJAH found the people of his day very undecided as to whether they had better worship Jehovah or a heathen idol called Baal. Without wasting any time in argument, he proceeds to demonstrate which deity is worthy of adoration. Two bullocks are caught and led up. "Now," says Elijah, "you slay that bullock, and I will slay this one. If fire comes from heaven and consumes your sacrifice, then you will all go over to your god; but if fire comes from heaven and consumes my sacrifice, then you will all come to my God." I hear the groan of the first bullock, and the stroke of the bludgeon, as he staggers back and drops dead. He is quartered, and put upon an altar of stones and wood. Now, Baal, is the time to do your worst.

If you have any fire anywhere about you, throw it on now, and roast this beef. From seven o'clock

in the morning until twelve o'clock at noon, the Baalites cry out for fire to come down from heaven, but it does not come. Elijah, unable to keep his face straight because of irresistible laughter, begins to joke them, and say: "Perhaps your god has gone hunting. He may be on the track of a fox or a deer, and cannot stop until he has brought down the game; or he may be engaged in some very loud conversation, and he cannot hear you. Call louder!" Then they cried louder and louder, and they took their knives and ran them across their hands, and across their faces, and across their feet, until the blood started, as much as to say: "O Baal! if you don't hear us, and don't send down fire from heaven, we will kill ourselves. Then what will you do?" It is nightfall, or almost that, and the bullock offered up by the Baalites is yet untouched on the altar. Now greater gravity comes to Elijah's countenance. From his overwhelming demeanour, I know him to be a prophet of the great God. I hear the groan of the second bullock, as it falls down dead. It is quartered, and put upon the very same altar where the Baalites had just enacted their farce. "Now," says Elijah, "that there may be no cheating about this, and no sleight-of-hand, and that there may be no fool in the first century or in the nineteenth century who shall deny the possibility of the miracle, go down and dip up twelve barrels of water out of the sea at the foot of the cliff, and throw the water all over the place, so that it must be more than ordinary fire that consumes the sacrifice." I hear the splash and drip of the twelve barrels of water submerging the place. Everything is ready now. Look, you Israelitish priests! Look, ye followers of the true God!

EVERYTHING IS READY.

All is still as the grave. Look! Elijah's deep and majestic voice rolls on the ear: "Lord God of Abraham, and Isaac,

and Jacob, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel! Hear me, O Lord! hear me!" Instantly a flash in the sky, a bolt through the air, and everything is ablaze—the bullock, the wood, the water, the stones, the ground—tongues of flame licking up the water out of the trenches as a pack of thirsty hounds lap up a stream. Elijah looks around on the multitude, as much as to say: "All in this audience who are in favour of Baal as God, will say Aye." No answer. He looks around upon the multitude again, as much as to say: "All those in this audience who are in favour of Jehovah as the Lord, will signify it;" and there was a great shout, floating up through the trees, floating off over the sea, floating down through the ages, floating here: "The Lord, He is the God," they all cry out, "the Lord, He is the God!"

As then, so there are now two gods, and some of us would worship one, and some of us would worship the other. Jehovah is *the* one, and this world is *the* other. If it is best to worship the world, let us all go over to that service. If it is best to worship Jehovah, let us all go over to His service. I do not now, at this point, express my preference. I take precisely the same position that Elijah took. Without saying which is the right God, and which is the false God, I simply cry out, in the hearing of this audience, "If the Lord be God, follow Him; but if Baal, then follow him."

There are a great many here who are decided for God. It is no more plain that white is white, and that black is black, than it is plain that you are a Christian. You talk like it, you act like it. Satan has given you up as lost to him. You are a fugitive slave he will never catch. I will spend no more time in thinking of your case than a farmer spends in thinking of the sheaves in the barn, while there are fifty loads in the field and the wind has changed to the north-east. You are for God. You are pronounced upon

that side. You can afford to be let alone, with only one word of congratulation as I pass; but the text makes no reference to you, and I shall make no reference to you.

Then there are those here who are decided for the world. You are pronounced on that side. You have no part in Christ. You tell me you are not Christians—you do not want to be; you have no anxiety about the future. If anybody asks you to serve God, you say "No!" with an indignation of emphasis. You are pronounced on the side of the world, and my text makes no allusion to you, and so I will make no allusion to you.

But there are those here who are neither one thing nor the other—vacillating from side to side—now for God, now for the world; and it is to them I come, and I now address them, crying out in the words of the prophet: "How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow Him."

For four or five days or weeks, you were seeking after God. You prayed. It may have been that the door was locked and no one knew it; but you prayed. You arose in some religious meeting and asked for the supplication of others. You read a few chapters in the Bible with a good deal of earnestness. You seemed fully started for heaven; but the first blast of temptation made you change your tack. It is uncertain whether the ship is going to New Orleans or to Liverpool. You went fifty miles in one direction, then turned and went fifty miles in the other direction. "I ought to be a Christian"—that is your one opinion; "I ought not to be a Christian"—that is your other opinion; and between those two opinions you halt.

My text describes, in the first place, very graphically, the condition of *those who try to serve the world and Christ at the same time, by compromising the matter*. You want to go into Christian society, but you want to keep your old cronies.

You want to come to the prayer-meeting, but you want also to go into dissipating society. You want to have Christ in one hand—you want to have the world in the other hand. You want to be characterized for Christian society, and yet you are not willing to give up the double damning influence of the wine-cup. And to-night, I believe, there are fifteen hundred people in this house who are

## HALTING HALF WAY

between God and Baal. Oh, that I might persuade you with the prophet, to do one thing or the other. You are in a most unsatisfactory position. You shrink back from the world, and you are losing its friendships and its joys, while, on the other hand, you are getting no advantage from the other side. You are halting in a desert. Three miles to the right there is a fountain, and three miles to the left there is a fountain. I do not pretend to say which fountain is the best; but I do say that either is better than standing down in the desert. If you do not mean to go clear over to God, then go clear over to the world. Perhaps you had better hunt up your season ticket to some sinful pleasure. Perhaps you had better replenish your wine cellar. Perhaps you had better crowd all the joys you can get out of sin into the next few months or years, because beyond that you shall never have any. Rake all the earth for satisfaction, and do it quickly, for the time is passing. If to-night, after a deliberate review of the whole subject, you think the world is the better master, then go over to it and have the matter settled. But if, my friends, without any proposition on my part—for at this point in my discourse I express no preference either for this or that God—if, without any proposition on my part, and after deliberately reviewing the whole subject, you conclude to go to Christ's side, then go. I do not pretend to say that that is the best side. I do not pretend



now that all Christians are not hypocrites, and that the Church is not a fraud, and that heaven is not a cheat; but I do say, that if after what you have heard against Christ, you still come to the conclusion that He is not so very undesirable after all, if you would really like to come on the side where the martyrs stood, if you would like to be on the side where your old-fashioned Christian father and mother used to stand, if you would like to be on the side where the one hundred and forty and four thousand radiant and tearless ones are standing, if you really have a longing after that side, and yearn finally to join those who are unbeseiged of sin, and sorrow, and trouble—then go over on that side. Do not die of thirst in a path across which there come a thousand buckets dripping from the spring. Do not starve on the doorstep of heaven, while within you hear the clash of the golden platters. Do not stand scraping the discordant strings of that worn-out instrument, when you may join the minstrelsy of God and the Lamb. Aye, stick to the *Ville du Havre* and go down, or swim to the *Loch Earn* and be saved. "If the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him."

Again, I remark: that my text describes graphically the condition of *those who have grace in their heart, but have not decided to make profession of it*. Where do you go to church? "Oh," says some man, "I go to a Presbyterian church, or a Methodist church, or a Baptist church; but I don't belong to any of them." So, the world claims him and the church claims him. The world has a right to claim him because he has never taken his name off their books; the church claims him because he helps to support its institutions—while, at the same time, he belongs to neither, practically. He wants to be a silent partner in the Lord's firm and get, at the last, his share of the spiritual profits, without having his name exposed on the sign-board. What is the matter? Is not the church good enough for them? or are they not good

h for the church? Ah, the trumpet will sound and ad will arise, and there will be

TWO WINGS OF THE LORD'S ARMY,

urch militant and the church triumphant; and there  
two rolls—the roll of the heavenly troops and the  
the earthly troops. On which roll is your name in-  
l? I hear the roll-call of the dead—I hear the calling  
se two great lists of the church in heaven and the  
on earth. I am waiting for your name to be  
need? Ah! not on either of them? Can it be?  
the Lord's host comes at last around about His  
, there may be some stragglers in the army who  
st through, but not many. When God's men-of-war  
o battle, let every ship show its colours. At the close  
great victory in time of war, they make a banquet and  
invite the generals, and officers, and some of the men  
down at the banquet. The table is covered with  
es and a-glitter with tankards, and they have a grand

Now, in our church in two or three weeks, we shall  
banquet. There will be a multitude there. The King  
lf will be there, and while we celebrate the victory of  
over the newly conquered souls, there will be a  
d a congratulation such as we have never experienced.  
hen that day comes, and the music sounds, and the  
up is poured, and the galleries of heaven are filled  
celestial congratulations, will you be at the table?  
e, for all things are now ready." But I must look out  
betray my preference, and lest my heart spoil the plan  
sermon, by telling you on which side I am; so I halt  
and do no more than the prophet did, when, without  
sing any preference for this god or that god, he cried  
"If the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then  
him." Be on one side or the other.

I remark again : my text most powerfully and graphically describes the indecision of *those who do not know what is the time to attend to religion*. There are two clarion voices in that man's soul. The one says: "Now." The other says: "To-morrow." I do not prétend to say which is the best time. Choose yourself, as to which is the best time. Perhaps it is better to put off this matter of religion for ten years. If so, drop the whole subject now. Just as a judge in court sets down a trial for three months a-head, and does not bother himself about the trial until that day comes, so set down a day for your conversion, ten years from now. If you can keep the world all these ten years, and at the close of that time can take Christ, will it not be better than to take Him now? Decided, then, let it be, that ten years from now, in 1884, you will attend to it. Or, if you be in robust health, and your prospects are very fair, then put it off twenty years—put it down for 1895. But I hear some one say: "How if an accident should take me off before that? How if I should lose my reason before that? How if my day of grace should end before that? How if the Holy Spirit should leave my soul before that? How if the avalanche of my transgressions should crush me before that? How if I should lift my eyes on hell before that?" Oh, I see the point you make. You mean to say: I think that it may be now or never. I think you mean to say that, of a million souls lost, nine hundred and ninety-nine thousand, nine hundred and ninety-nine are

#### LOST THROUGH PROCRASTINATION.

I think you mean to say that there is not more than one soul in a century that goes into the lost world through any thing but putting it off. I think you mean to say that if in the doomed world it was asked that all those should rise up who had been destroyed through procrastination, that they would all rise up, crying out: "We lost heaven by putting

"Oh, if around that one word "now," there clusters heaven; if around that one word "to-morrow," there the forked tongues of despair, then perhaps to-night had better decide the matter, one way or the other, and "Oh, Lord God, this moment I surrender myself into keeping;" or else say: "I put this matter off for y years. Witness, heaven, earth, and hell, that I am afraid to take the responsibility." When you go out of the side of this building, to-night, you will not find a street going directly to the North. You will have to go to East or West, up or down Schermerhorn-street; and it is just so with your soul—you cannot go straight leaving this place; you will either go to the right or to the left; you will either go towards God or towards Baal—towards light or towards darkness. You start, to-night, on a journey that will never

The foot will stiffen, and the lungs will fail to catch breath, and over the eyes there will come a film that will shut out the light of the sun, and moon, and stars, and your journey will stop; but your soul will go on, on; up, up; or down, down, through Edens or deserts; along rivers of light, through Marahs of eternal bitterness; under palm or bramble; through homesteads or hovels; halting at the hall filled with guests; at the marriage of the king's son; or halting where the air, with skeleton arms, shall beat the drum with the "Dead March" of the soul: "Woe! Woe!"

## MUSIC IN THE CHURCHES.

came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to give one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord."—2 Chron.

THE temple was done. It was the very chorus of all magnificence and pomp. Splendour crowded against splendour. It was the diamond necklace of the earth. From

the huge pillars crowned with leaves of flowers and rows of pomegranate wrought out in burnished metal, down even to the tongs and snuffers made out of pure gold, everything was as complete as the God-directed architect could make it. It seemed as if a vision from heaven had alighted on the mountains. The day for dedication came. Tradition says that there were in and around about the temple, on that day, 200,000 silver trumpets, 40,000 harps, 40,000 timbrels, and 200,000 singers; so that all modern demonstrations at Dusseldorf or Boston seem nothing compared with that. As this great sound surged up amid the precious stones of the temple, it must have seemed like the river of life dashing against the amethyst of the wall of heaven. The sound arose, and God, as if to show that He was well pleased with the music, and with the music which His children make in all ages, dropped into the midst of the temple on a cloud of glory so overpowering that the officiating priests were obliged to stop in the midst of the services.

There has been much discussion as to where music was born. I think that at the beginning, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy, that the earth heard the echo. The cloud on which the angels stood to celebrate the creation, was the birth-place of song. The stars that glitter at night are only so many keys of celestial pearl, on which God's fingers play the music of the spheres. Inanimate nature is full of God's stringed and wind instruments. Silence itself—perfect silence—is only a musical rest in God's great anthem of worship. Wind among the leaves, insect humming in the summer air, the rush of billow upon beach, the ocean far out sounding its everlasting psalm, the bobolink on the edge of the forest, the quail whistling up from the grass, are music. On Blackwell's Island I heard, the other day, coming from a window of the lunatic asylum, a very sweet song. It was

by one who had lost her reason, and I had come to that even the deranged and disordered elements of would make music to our ear, if we only had acutenough to listen. I suppose that even the sounds in that are discordant and repulsive make harmony in ear. You know that you may come so near to an era that the sounds be painful instead of pleasurable; think that we stand so near devastating storm and ul whirlwind, we cannot hear that which makes to ear and the ear of the spirits above us, a music as

COMPLETE AS IT IS TREMENDOUS.

day of judgment, which will be a day of uproar and , I suppose will bring no dissonance to the ears of who can calmly listen; although it be as when some performer is executing a boisterous piece of music, he mes breaks down the instrument on which he plays, so be on that last day that the grand march of God, by the fingers of thunder, and earthquake, and con- ion, may break down the world upon which the music uted. Not only is inanimate nature full of music, but as wonderfully organized the human voice, so that in ainst throat and lungs there are fourteen direct s which can make over sixteen thousand different , and there are thirty indirect muscles which can it has been estimated, more than one hundred and 7-three millions of sounds! Now, I say, when God constructed the human voice, and when He has filled ole earth with harmony, and when He recognized it in ient temple, I have a right to come to the conclusion od loves music.

pose, this morning, to speak about sacred music; first g you its importance, and then stating some of the es to its advancement.

I draw the first argument for the importance of sacred music from the fact *that God commanded it*. Through Paul He tells us to admonish one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs; and through David he cries out: "Sing ye to God, all ye kingdoms of the earth." And there are hundreds of other passages I might name, proving that it is as much a man's duty to sing as it is his duty to pray. Indeed, I think there are more commands in the Bible to sing than there are to pray. God not only asks for the human voice but for instruments of music. He asks for the cymbal, and the harp, and the trumpet. And I suppose that, in the last days of the church, the harp, the lute, the trumpet, and all the instruments of music that have given their chief aid to theatre and bacchanal, will be brought by their masters and laid down at the feet of Christ, and then sounded in the church's triumph, on her way from suffering into glory. "Praise ye the Lord!" Praise Him with your voices. Praise Him with stringed instruments and with organs.

I draw another argument for the importance of this exercise from *the impressiveness of the exercise*. You know something of what secular music has achieved. You know it has made its impression upon governments, upon laws, upon literature, upon whole generations. One inspiring national air is worth thirty thousand men as a standing army. There comes a time in the battle when one bugle is worth a thousand muskets. In the earlier part of the late war, the government proposed to economize in bands of music, and many of them were sent home; but the generals in the army sent word to Washington: "You are making a very great mistake. We are falling back and falling back. We have not enough music." Then the government changed its mind, more bands of music were sent to the field, and the day of shameful defeat terminated. I have to tell you that no nation or church can afford to severely economize in music.

ly of you are illustrations of what sacred song can do. When it you were brought into the kingdom of Jesus. You stood out against the argument and the glow of the pulpit; but when, in the sweet words of John Wesley, or John Newton, or Toplady, the love of God was sung to your soul, then you surrendered, as armed with a shield that could not be taken by a host, lifts its window to receive a harp's trill. There was a Scotch soldier dying in Flanders, and a Scotch minister came in to give him the tidings of the Gospel. The man turned over on his back and said: "Don't talk to me about religion." Then the Scotch minister began to sing a familiar hymn of Scotland that was composed by David Dickenson, beginning in the words:

"Oh, mother, dear Jerusalem,  
When shall I come to thee?"

He sang it to the tune of "Dundee," and everybody in the church knows that; and as he began to sing, the dying man turned over on his pillow, and said to the minister: "Where did you learn that?" "Why," replied the minister, "my mother taught me that." "So did mine," said the dying Scotch soldier; and the very foundation of the church was upturned, and then and there he yielded himself to Christ. Oh, it has an irresistible power. Luther's hymns have been forgotten, but his "Judgment Hymn" has lived through the ages, and will keep on singing until the last of the archangel's trumpet shall bring about that day which the hymn celebrates. I would to God that all who hear me, to-day, would take these songs of salvation-messages from heaven: for, just as certainly as the Lord brought food to Elijah, by the brook Cherith, so these harmonies, God-sent, are flying to your soul with the word of life. Open your mouth and take it, O hungry soul!



I have also noticed the power of *sacred song to soothe perturbation*. You may have come in here, this morning, with a great many worriments and anxieties, yet, perhaps in the singing of the first hymn, you lost all those worriments and anxieties. You have read in the Bible of Saul and how he was sad and angry, and how the boy David came in and played the evil spirit out of him. A Spanish king was melancholy. The windows were all closed. He sat in the darkness. Nothing could bring him forth until Faraneli came and discoursed music for three or four days to him. On the fourth day he looked up, and wept, and rejoiced, and the windows were thrown open, and that which all the splendours of the court could not do, the power of song accomplished. If you have anxieties and worriments, try this heavenly charm upon them. Do not sit down on the bank of the hymn, but plunge in, that the devil of care may be brought out of you.

It also *arouses to action*. Do you not know that

A SINGING CHURCH IS ALWAYS A TRIUMPHANT CHURCH?

If a congregation is silent during the exercise, or partially silent, it is the silence of death. If, when the hymn is given out, you hear the faint hum of here and there a father and mother in Israel, while the vast majority are silent, that minister of Christ who is presiding needs to have a very strong constitution if he does not get the chills. He needs not only the grace of God, but nerves like whalebone. It is amazing how some people, who have voice enough to discharge all their duties in the world, when they come into the house of God have no voice to discharge this duty. I really believe that if the Church of Christ could rise up and sing as it ought to sing, that where we have a hundred souls brought into the kingdom of Christ, there would be a thousand. How was it in the time of the Reformation? Cardinal Cajetan said: "Luther conquered us by his songs."

In the time of that wonderful reformer, there was a strange scene in Lubeck. Protestantism and Papacy had been in fierce collision. Sometimes one party triumphed, and sometimes the other party triumphed. One day, in St. Mary's cathedral, mass was said, and, just as the audience were dispersing, two boys struck up one of Luther's chorals, and the whole audience joined in it just as if it had been given out from the pulpit, and that audience, that came the followers of one religion, went away the followers of another. Protestantism had conquered by that one choral, and for many years that cathedral was given up to worship by Protestants.

But I must now speak of some of the obstacles in the way of the advancement of this sacred music; and the first is that it has *been impressed into the service of superstition*. I am far from believing that music ought always to be positively religious. Refined art has opened places where music has been secularized, and lawfully so. The drawing-room, the musical club, the orchestra, the concert, by the gratification of pure taste, and the production of harmless amusement and the improvement of talent, have become very forces in the advancement of our civilization. Music has as much right to laugh in Surrey Gardens as it has to pray in St. Paul's. In the kingdom of nature, we have the glad piping of the wind as well as the long metre psalm of the thunder. But while all this is so, every observer has noticed that this art, which God intended for the improvement of the ear, and the voice, and the head, and the heart, has often been impressed into the service of false religions. False religions have depended more upon the hymning of their congregations than upon the pulpit proclamation of their dogmas. Crozier and confessional have not done so much to maintain the Papacy, as her magnificent chants in chapel and cathedral. Some of the masters of this art were born in that Church, and their spirits still move in her impressive harmonies. There has been no

more thrilling music heard on earth than the weeping strain of her *Miserere*, the inspiring roll of her *Stabat Mater*, or the jubilant strain of her *Te Deum Laudamus*. This has advanced music as an art, but not as a devotional exercise. Tartini, the musical composer, dreamed one night that Satan snatched from his hand an instrument and played upon it something very sweet—a dream that has often been fulfilled in our day, the voice and the instruments that ought to have been devoted to Christ, captured from the church and applied to purposes of superstition and sin.

Another obstacle has been *an inordinate fear of criticism*. The vast majority of people, singing in church, never want anybody else to hear them sing.

#### EVERYBODY IS WAITING FOR SOMEBODY ELSE

to do his duty. If we all sang, then the inaccuracies that are evident when only a few sing would not be heard at all; they would be drowned out. God only asks you to do as well as you can, and then, if you get the wrong pitch, or keep wrong time, he will forgive any deficiency of the ear and imperfection of the voice. Angels will not laugh if you should lose your place in the musical scale, or come in at the close a bar behind. There are three schools of singing, I am told—the German school, the Italian school, and the French school of singing. Now, I would like to add a fourth school, and that is the school of Christ. The voice of a contrite, broken heart, although it may not be able to stand human criticism, makes better music to God's ear than the most artistic performance when the heart is wanting. I know it is easier to preach on this than it is to practice; but I sing for two reasons—first, because I like it, and next, because I want to encourage those who do not know how. I have but very little faculty in that direction, and no culture at all, yet I am resolved to sing though every

note should go off like a Chinese gong. God has commanded it, and I dare not be silent. He calls on the beasts, on the cattle, on the dragons, to praise him, and we ought not to be behind the cattle and the dragons.

Another obstacle that has been in the way of the advancement of this holy art, has been the fact that there has been *so much angry discussion on the subject of music*. There are those who would have this exercise conducted by musical instruments. In the same church, there are those who do not like musical instruments, and so it is organ and no organ, and there is a fight. In another church, it is a question whether the music shall be conducted by a precentor or by a drilled choir. Some want a drilled choir and some want a precentor, and *there* is a fight. Then there are those who would like in the church to have the organ played in a dull, lifeless, droning way, while there are others who would have it wreathed into fantastics, branching out in jets and spangles of sound, rolling and tossing in marvellous convolutions, as when, in pyrotechnic display, you think a piece is exhausted, it breaks out in wheels, rockets, blue lights, and serpentine demonstrations. Some would have the organ played in almost inaudible sweetness, and others would have it full of staccato passages that make the audience jump, with great eyes and hair on end, as though by a vision of the Witch of Endor. And he who tries to please all is a fool! Nevertheless, you are to admit the fact that this contest which is going on, not in hundreds but in thousands of the churches of the United States to-day, is a mighty hindrance to the advancement of this art. In this way scores and scores of churches are entirely crippled as to all influence, and the music is a damage rather than a praise.

Another obstacle in the advancement of this art has been the erroneous notion that this part of the *service could be conducted by delegation*. Churches have said: "Oh what an

easy time we shall have. The minister will do the preaching, and the choir will do the singing, and we will have nothing to do." And you know as well as I that there are a great multitude of churches all through this land, where the people are not expected to sing, the whole work is done by delegation of four, or six, or ten persons, and the audience are silent. In such a church in Syracuse, an old elder persisted in singing, and so the choir appointed a committee to go and ask the squire if he would not stop. You know that in a great multitude of churches, the choir are expected to do all the singing, and the great mass of the people are expected to be silent, and if you utter your voice you are interfering. There they stand, the four, with opera-glass dangling at their side, singing "Rock of Ages, cleft for me," with the same spirit that the night before, on the stage, they took their part in the "Grand Duchess" or "Don Giovanni."

My Christian friends, have we a right to delegate to others the discharge of this duty which God demands of us? Suppose that four wood-thrushes should propose to do all the singing some bright day when the woods are ringing with bird voices. It is decided that four wood-thrushes shall do all the singing of the forest. Let all other voices keep silent. How beautifully the four warble. It is really fine music. But how long will you keep the forest still? Why, Christ would come into that forest and look up as he looked through the olives, and He would wave His hand and say:

"LET EVERYTHING THAT HATH BREATH PRAISE THE LORD;"

and, keeping time with the stroke of innumerable wings, there would be five thousand bird voices leaping into the harmony. Suppose this delegation of musical performers were tried in heaven; suppose that four choice spirits should try to do the singing of the upper temple. Hush now,

s and dominions and principalities. David! be still, you were "the sweet singer of Israel." Paul! keep though you have come to that crown of rejoicing. d Baxter! keep still, though this is the "Saint's ting Rest." Four spirits now do all the singing. w long would heaven be quiet? How long? "Hal-!" would cry some glorified Methodist from under ar. "Praise the Lord!" would sing the martyrs nong the thrones. "Thanks be unto God who giveth victory!" a great multitude of redeemed spirits ry. Myriads of voices coming into the harmony, and hundred and forty and four thousand breaking forth e acclamation. Stop that loud singing! Stop! Oh r cannot hear me. You might as well try to drown nder of the sky, or beat back the roar of the sea, for oul in heaven has resolved to do its own singing. hat we should have tried on earth that which they do in heaven, and, instead of joining all our voices praise of the most high God, delegating perhaps to crated men and women this most solemn and most ul service.

in this church, we have resolved upon the plan of ing the music by a precentor. We do it for two : one is that by throwing the whole responsibility e mass of the people, making the great multitude ir, we might rouse more heartiness. The congre- coming on the Sabbath-day feel that they cannot e this part of the great service to any one else, and themselves assume it. We have had glorious con- nal singing here. People have come many miles to

They are not sure about the preaching, but they ays depend on the singing. We have heard the oming up like "the voice of many waters," but it done at a better rate after awhile, when we shall

realize the height, and the depth, and the immensity of this privilege.

I forgot to state the other reason why we adopted this plan. That is, we do not want any choir quarrels. You know very well that in scores of the churches, there has been perpetual contention in that direction. The only church fight that ever occurred under my ministry was over a melodeon, in my first settlement. Have you never been in church on the Sabbath-day, and heard the choir sing, and you said "That is splendid music." The next Sabbath, you were in that church, and there was no choir at all. Why? The leader was mad, or his assistants were mad, or they were all mad together. Some of the choirs are made up of our best Christian people. Some of the warmest friends I have ever had have stood up in them, Sabbath after Sabbath, conscientiously and successfully leading the praises of God. But the majority of the choirs throughout the land are not made up of Christian people, and

THREE-FOURTHS OF THE CHURCH FIGHTS ORIGINATE IN THE  
ORGAN LOFT.

I take that back and say nine-tenths. A great multitude of our churches are dying of choirs.

There are two or three things we need to do in this church before we have done all our duty on this subject. The first thing is to acknowledge our past crime before God, in taking so little part in this service. If a man with voice enough to sing keep silent during this exercise, he commits a crime against God and insults the Almighty.

We want also in this church a congregational singing-school, which, by the help of God, we will establish in the autumn, not on a week day but on the Sabbath night at seven o'clock, half-an-hour before the other services, in that preceding half hour rehearsing the music which in the next

hour we are to sing. You know very well that many of the singing-schools of the country have not advanced this cause at all. Many of them in the country school-houses and church basements have been scenes of revelry rather than Christian service—men and women learning less of music than of running up and down the entire scale of sin. What we want is a congregational singing-school, conducted by a Christian man in a Christian way; people finding out that they have a very solemn and a very delightful duty to perform, and all participating in it.

Then further, we want to rouse all our families upon this subject. We want each family of our congregation to be a singing-school. Childish petulance, obduracy and intractability would be soothed if we had more singing in the household, and then our little ones would be prepared for the great congregation on the Sabbath-day, their voices uniting with our voices in the praises of the Lord. After a shower, there are scores of streams that come down the mountain side with voices rippling and silvery, pouring into one river and then rolling in united strength to the sea. So, I would have all the families in my church send forth the voice of prayer and praise, pouring it into the great tide of public worship that rolls on and on to empty into the great, wide heart of God. Never can we have our church sing as it ought, until our families sing as they ought.

There will be a great revolution on this subject in all our churches. God will come down by His Spirit and rouse up the old hymns and tunes that have not been more than half awake since the time of our grandfathers. The silent pews in the church will break forth into music, and when the conductor takes his place on the Sabbath-day, there will be a great host of voices rushing into the harmony. My Christian friends, if we have no taste for this service on earth, what will we do in heaven where they all sing, and sing for ever?



Let me prophesy in regard to any one here who has no delight in this part of the church services, that he would have no delight in the worship of heaven. If you do not sing the praises of God on earth, I do not believe you will ever sing them in glory. I would that our singing to-day might be like the Saturday night rehearsal for the Sabbath morning in the skies, and that we might begin now, by the strength and by the help of God, to discharge a duty which none of us have fully performed—

“Let those refuse to sing  
Who never knew our God;  
But children of the heavenly King  
Should speak their joys abroad.

“The hill of Zion yields  
A thousand sacred sweets,  
Before we reach the heavenly fields  
Or walk the golden streets.

“Then let our songs abound,  
And every tear be dry;  
We're marching through Emmanuel's ground.  
To fairer worlds on high.”

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### JOB'S COMFORTERS.

“Miserable comforters are ye all.”—*Job xvi. 2.*

THE man of Uz had a great many trials—the loss of his family, the loss of his property, the loss of his health; but the most exasperating thing that came upon him was the tantalizing talk of those who ought to have sympathized with him. And looking around upon them, and weighing what they had said, he utters the words of my text.

Why did God let sin come into the world? It is a question I often hear discussed, but never satisfactorily

answered. God made the world fair and beautiful at the start. If our first parents had not sinned in Eden, they might have gone out of that garden and found fifty paradises all around the earth—Europe, Asia, Africa, North and South America—so many flower-gardens or orchards of fruit, fragrant and luscious. I suppose that when God poured out the Gihon and the Hiddekel, He poured out, at the same time, the Hudson and the Susquehanna; the whole earth was very fair and beautiful to look upon. Why did it not stay so? God had the power to keep back sin and woe. Why did He not keep them back? Why not every cloud roseate, and every step a joy, and every sound music, and all the ages a long jubilee of sinless men and sinless women? God can make a rose as easily as He can make a thorn. Why, then, the predominance of thorns? He can make good, fair, sweet fruit as well as gnarled and sour fruit. Why so much, then, that is gnarled and sour? He can make men robust health. Why, then, are there so many invalids? Why not have for our whole race perpetual leisure instead of this struggle, and toil, and tussle for a livelihood? I will tell you why God let sin come into the world—when I get on the other side of the River of Death. That is the place where all questions will be answered and such mysteries solved. Who on this side that river attempts to answer the question only illustrates his own ignorance and incompetency. All I know is one great fact, and that is, that a herd of woes has come in upon us, trampling down everything fair and beautiful. A sword at the gate of Eden and

#### A SWORD AT EVERY GATE.

More people under the ground than on it. The graveyards a vast majority. The six thousand Winters have made more graves than the six thousand Summers can cover up. Trouble taken the tender heart of this world in its two rough

hands and pinched it until the nations wail with the agony. If all the mounds of graveyards that have been lifted, were put side by side, you might step on them and nothing else, going all around the world, and around again, and around again. These are the facts. And now I have to say that, in a world like this, the grandest occupation is that of giving condolence. This holy science of imparting comfort to the troubled we ought all of us to study. There are many of you who could look around upon some of your very best friends, who wish you well, and are very intelligent, and yet be able truthfully to say to them in your days of trouble: "Miserable comforters are ye all."

I remark, in the first place, that *very voluble people are incompetent for the work of giving comfort*. Bildad and Eliphaz had the gift of language, and with their words almost bothered Job's life out. Alas! for these voluble people that go among the houses of the afflicted, and talk, and talk, and talk, and talk. They rehearse their own sorrows, and then they tell the poor sufferers that they feel badly now, but they will feel worse after awhile. Silence! Do you expect, with a thin court-plaster of words, to heal a wound deep as the soul? Step very gently around about a broken heart. Talk very softly around those whom God has bereft. Then go your way. Deep sympathy has not much to say. A firm grasp of the hand, a compassionate look, just one word that means as much as a whole dictionary, and you have given, perhaps, all the comfort that a soul needs. A man has a terrible wound in his arm. The surgeon comes and binds it up. "Now," he says: "carry that arm in a sling, and be very careful of it. Let no one touch it," But the neighbours have heard of the accident, and they come in, and they say: "Let us see it." And the bandage is pulled off, and this one and that one must feel it and see how much it is swollen, and there is irritation, and inflammation, and exasperation,

there ought to be healing and cooling. The surgeon in, and says: "What does all this mean? You have business to touch those bandages. That wound will never unless you let it alone." So there are souls broken in sorrow. What they most want is rest, or very mild and gentle treatment; but the neighbours have heard of bereavement, or of the loss, and they come in to sympathize, and they say: "Show us now the wound. What are his last words? Rehearse now the whole scene. How did you feel when you found you were an orphan?" Tearing the bandages here, and pulling them off there, leaving a festering wound that the balm of God's grace had already begun to heal. Oh, let no loquacious people, with ever-flowing tongues, go into the homes of the distressed. In I remark: that all those persons are incompetent to give any kind of comfort who act merely as *worldly philosophers*. They come in and say: "Why, this is what you ought to have expected. The laws of nature must have their way;" and then they get eloquent over something that has been seen in *post mortem* examinations. Now,

#### AWAY WITH ALL HUMAN PHILOSOPHY

at a time. What difference does it make to that father whether what disease their son died of? He is dead, and it makes no difference whether the trouble was in the cerebral or hypogastric region. If the philosopher be of the medical school, he will come and say: "You ought to control your feelings. You must not cry so. You must have a cooler temperament. You must have self-reliance, self-government, self-control;"—an iceberg reproving a moth for having a drop of dew in its eye. A violinist plays his instrument, and he sweeps his fingers across the strings, now evoking strains of joy, and now strains of sad-

ness. He cannot play all the tunes on one string. The human soul is an instrument of a thousand strings, and all sorts of emotions were made to play on it. Now an anthem, now a dirge. It is no evidence of weakness when one is overcome of sorrow. Edmund Burke was found in the pasture-field with his arms around a horse's neck, caressing him, and some one said: "Why, the great man had lost his mind." No; that horse belonged to his son, who had recently died; and his great heart broke over the grief. It is no sign of weakness that men are overcome of their sorrows. Thank God for the relief of tears. Have you never been in trouble when you could not weep, and you would have given anything for a cry? David did well when he mourned for Absalom, Abraham did well when he bemoaned Sarah, Christ did well when He wept for Lazarus; and the last man that I want to see come anywhere near me when I have any kind of trouble, is a worldly philosopher.

Again I remark: that those persons are incompetent for the work of comfort-bearing who have *nothing but cant to offer*. There are those who have the idea that you must groan over the distressed and afflicted. There are times in grief when one cheerful face, dawning upon a man's soul, is worth a thousand dollars to him. Do not whine over the afflicted. Take the promises of the Gospel, and utter them in a manly tone. Do not be afraid to smile if you feel like it. Do not drive any more hearses through that poor soul. Do not tell him the trouble was fore-ordained; it will not be any comfort to know it was a million years coming. If you want to find splints for a broken bone, do not take cast iron. Do not tell them it is God's justice that weighs out grief. They want now to hear of God's tender mercy. In other words, do not give them *aqua fortis* when they need valerian.

Again I remark: that

## THOSE PERSONS ARE POOR COMFORTERS

who have never had any trouble themselves. A larkspur cannot lecture on the nature of a snowflake—it never saw a snowflake; and those people who have always lived in the summer of prosperity cannot talk to those who are frozen in disaster. God keeps aged people in the world, I think, for this very work of sympathy. They have been through all these trials. They know all that which irritates and all that which soothes. If there are men and women here who have old people in the house, or near at hand, so that they can easily reach them, I congratulate you. Some of us have had trials in life, and although we have had many friends around about us, we have wished that father and mother were still alive that we might go and tell them. Perhaps they could not say much, but it would have been such a comfort to have them around. These aged ones who have been all through the trials of life know how to give condolence. Cherish them; let them lean on your arm—these aged people. If, when you speak to them, they cannot hear just what you say the first time, and you have to say it a second time, when you say it the second time, do not say it sharply. If you do, you will be sorry for it on the day when you take the last look and brush back the silvery locks from the wrinkled brow just before they screw the lid on. Blessed be God for the old people! They may not have much strength to go around, but they are God's appointed ministers of comfort to a broken heart.

People who have not had trial themselves cannot give comfort to others. They may talk very beautifully and they may give you a great deal of poetic sentiment; but while poetry is perfume that smells sweet, it makes a very poor salve. If you have a grave in a pathway, and somebody comes and covers it all over with flowers, it is a grave yet.

Those who have not had grief themselves, know not the mystery of a broken heart. They know not the meaning of childlessness, and the having no one to put to bed at night, or the standing in a room where every book, and picture, and door are full of memories—the door mat where she sat, the cup out of which she drank—the place where she stood at the door and clapped her hands—the odd figures that she scribbled—the blocks she built into a house. Ah! no, you must have trouble yourself before you can comfort trouble in others. But come all ye who have been bereft, and ye who have been comforted in your sorrows, and stand around these afflicted souls and say to them: "I had that very sorrow myself. God comforted me and he will comfort you;" and that will go right to the spot. In other words, to comfort others, we must have faith in God, practical experience, and good, sound, common sense.

But there are three or four considerations that I will bring this morning to those who are sorrowful and distressed, and that we can always bring to them, knowing that they will effect a cure. And the first consideration is that

#### GOD SENDS OUR TROUBLES IN LOVE.

I often hear people in their troubles say: "Why, I wonder what God has against me?" They seem to think God has some grudge against them because trouble and misfortune have come. Oh, no. Do you not remember that passage of Scripture: "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth?" A child comes in with a very bad splinter in its hand, and you try to extract it. It is a very painful operation. The child draws back from you, but you persist. You are going to take that splinter out, so you take the child with a gentle but firm grasp, for although there may be pain in it, the splinter must come out. And it is love that dictates it, and makes you persist. My friends, I really think that nearly

For sorrows in this world are only the hand of our Father touching some thorn. If all these sorrows were sent by us, I would say, arm yourselves against them, and as pical climes when a tiger comes down from the mountain and carries off a child from the village, the neighbours together and go into the forest and hunt the monster, would have you, if I thought these misfortunes were from an enemy, go out and battle against them. But no, come from a Father so kind, so loving, so gentle, that the prophet, speaking of His tenderness and mercy, drops the name of a father, and says: "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you."

And in I remark, there is comfort in the thought that God in this process *is going to make you useful*. Do you know those who accomplish the most for God and heaven have all been under the harrow? Show me a man that has done anything for Christ in this day, in a public or private way, who has had no trouble, and whose path has been smooth. Ah, no! Go this afternoon at three o'clock into the beautiful parlour in the city of Philadelphia and see the wretched outcast children there, and ask the history of some, and why it is that that Christian woman every afternoon gathers in these outcasts, and talks with them and prays with them, and tells them of Jesus, and is able to prepare them, by the grace of God, prepared for heaven. Want to know the history of that family? I could go on and tell it. She was not always an earnest Christian—once a daughter of fashion; but the first day of her torments in Philadelphia I confronted her in awful grief. In the next room her only child lay. He had been drowned in the Branch, and they had just brought him in. Oh, impotent all human comfort seemed to be there and yet God comforted and lifted her out of that darkness, through all that tribulation. He blessed her, and by a



baptism of tears she was set apart to look after the outcast, and the destitute, and the abandoned. What useless beings we are until sanctified trouble moulds us.

I once went through an axe factory, and I saw them take the bars of iron and thrust them into the terrible furnaces. Then besweated workmen with long tongs stirred the blaze. Then they brought out a bar of iron and put it in a crushing machine, and then they put it between jaws that bit it in twain. Then they put it on an anvil, and there were great hammers swung by machinery—each one half a ton in weight—that went thump! thump! thump! If that iron could have spoken, it would have said: "Why all this beating? Why must I be pounded any more than any other iron?" The workmen would have said: "We want to make axes out of you, keen, sharp axes—axes with which to hew down the forest, and build the ship, and erect houses, and carry on a thousand enterprises of civilization. That's the reason we pound you." Now, God puts a soul into the furnace of trial, and then it is brought out and run through the crushing machine, and then it comes down on the anvil and upon it, blow after blow, blow after blow, and the soul cries out: "Oh Lord, what does all this mean?" God says: "I want to make something very useful out of you. You shall be something to hew with, and something to build with. It is a practical process through which I am putting you." Yes, my Christian friends,

#### WE WANT MORE TOOLS

in the Church of God; not more wedges to split with. We have enough of these. Not more bores with which to drill. We have too many bores. What we really want is keen, sharp, well-tempered axes, and if there be any other way of making them than in the hot furnace, and on the hard anvil, and under the heavy hammer, I do not know what it is.

Remember that if God brings any kind of chastisement upon you, it is only to make you useful. Do not sit down discouraged, and say: "I have no more reason for living. I wish I were dead." Oh! there never was so much reason for your living as now. By this ordeal you have been consecrated a priest of the most high God. Go out and do your whole work for the Master.

Again: there is comfort in the thought that all our *troubles are a revelation*. Have you ever thought of it in that connection? The man who has never been through chastisement is ignorant about a thousand things in his soul he ought to know. For instance, here is a man who prides himself on his cheerfulness of character. He has no patience with anybody who is depressed in spirits. Oh! it is easy for him to be cheerful, with his fine house, his filled wardrobe, and well-strung instruments of music, and tapestried parlour, and plenty of money in the bank waiting for some permanent investment. It is easy for him to be cheerful. But suppose his fortune goes to pieces, and his house goes down under the sheriff's hammer, and the banks will not have anything to do with his paper. Suppose those people who were once elegantly entertained at his table get so short-sighted that they cannot recognise him upon the street. How then? Is it so easy to be cheerful? It is easy to be cheerful in the home, after the day's work is done, and the gas is turned on, and the house is full of romping little ones. But suppose the piano is shut because the fingers that played on it will no more touch the keys, and the childish voice that asked so many questions will ask no more. Then is it so easy? When a man wakes up and finds that his resources are all gone, he begins to rebel, and he says: "God is hard; God is outrageous. He had no business to do this to me." My friends, those of us who have been through trouble know what a sinful and rebellious heart we have, and how much God has

to put up with, and how much we need pardon. It is only in the light of a flaming furnace that we can learn our own weakness and our own lack of moral resource.

There is also a great deal of comfort in the fact that

#### THERE WILL BE A FAMILY RECONSTRUCTION

*in a better place.* From Scotland, or England, or Ireland, a child emigrates to America. It is very hard parting, but he comes, after awhile writing home as to what a good land it is. Another brother comes, a sister comes, and another, and after awhile the mother comes, and after a while the father comes, and now they are all here, and they have a time of great congratulation and a very pleasant reunion. Well, it is just so with our families: they are emigrating toward a better land. Now, one goes out. Oh! how hard it is to part with him! Another goes. Oh! how hard it is to part with her! And another, and another, and we ourselves will, after awhile, go over, and then we will be together. Oh! what a re-union! Do you believe that? "Yes," you say. Oh! you do not. You do not believe it as you believe other things. If you do, and with the same emphasis, why it would take nine-tenths of your trouble off your heart. The fact is, heaven to many of us is a great fog. It is away off somewhere, filled with an uncertain and indefinite population. That is the kind of heaven that many of us dream about; but it is the most tremendous fact in all the universe—this heaven of the Gospel. Our departed friends are not afloat. The residence in which you live is not so real as the residence in which they stay. You are afloat—you who do not know in the morning what will happen before night. They are housed and safe for ever. Do not, therefore, pity your departed friends who have died in Christ. They do not need any of your pity. You might as well send a letter of condolence to Queen Victoria on her

obscurity, or to the Rothchilds on their poverty, as to pity those who have won the palm. Do not say of those who are departed: "Poor child!" "Poor father!" "Poor mother!" They are not poor. *You* are poor—you whose homes have been shattered, not they. You do not dwell much with your families in this world. All day long you are off to business. Will it not be pleasant when you can be together all the while? If you have had four children and one is gone, and anybody asks how many children you have, do not be so infidel as to say three. Say four—one in heaven. Do not think that the grave is unfriendly. You go into your room and dress for some grand entertainment, and you came forth beautifully appressed; and the grave is only the place where we go to dress for the glorious resurrection, and we will come out radiant, mortality having become immortality. Oh! how much condolence there is in this thought! I expect to see my kindred in heaven—I expect to see them just as certainly as I expect to go home to-day. Aye, I shall more certainly see them. Eight or ten will come up from the graveyard back of Somerville, and one will come from the mountains back of Amoy, China, and another will come up from the sea off Cape Hatteras, and thirty will come up from Greenwood; and I shall know them better than I ever knew them here. And your friends—they may be across the sea, but the trumpet that sounds here will sound there. You will come up on just the same day. Some morning you have overslept yourself, and you open your eyes and see that the sun is high in the heavens, and you say: "I have overslept, and I must be up and away." So

## YOU WILL OPEN YOUR EYES

on the morning of the resurrection, in the full blaze of God's light, and you will say: "I must be up and away." Oh!

yes, you will come up, and there will be a re-union, a reconstruction of your family. I like what Halyburton (I think it was)—good old Mr. Halyburton—said in his last moments—“I thank God that I ever lived, and that I have a father in heaven, and a mother in heaven, and brothers in heaven, and sisters in heaven, and I am now going up to see them.”

I remark once more: our troubles in this world *are preparative for glory*. What a transition it was for Paul—from the slippery deck of a foundering ship to the calm presence of Jesus! What a transition it was for Latimer—from the stake to a throne! What a transition it was for Robert Hall—from insanity to glory! What a transition it was for Richard Baxter—from the dropsy to the “saint’s everlasting rest!” And what a transition it will be for you—from a world of sorrow to a world of joy. John Holland, when he was dying, said: “What means this brightness in the room? Have you lighted the candles?” “No,” they replied, “we have not lighted any candles.” Then said he, “Welcome heaven!” The light already beaming upon his pillow. Oh! ye who are persecuted in this world, your enemies will get off the track after a while, and all will speak well of you among the thrones. Ho! ye who are sick now. No medicines to take there. One breath of the eternal hills will thrill you with immortal vigour. And ye who are lonesome now. There will be a million spirits to welcome you into their companionship. O ye bereft souls! there will be no gravedigger’s spade that will cleave the side of that hill, and there will be no dirge wailing from that temple. The river of God, deep as the joy of heaven, will roll on between banks odorous with balm, and over depths bright with jewels, and under skies roseate with gladness, argosies of light going down the stream to the stroke of glittering oar and the song of angels! Not one sigh in the wind; not one tear mingling with the waters.

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## EVERY-DAY RELIGION.

"Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."—1 *Corinthians* x. 31.

WHEN the apostle, in this text, sets forth the idea that so common an act on as the taking of food and drink is to be conducted to the glory of God, he proclaims the importance of religion in the ordinary affairs of our life. In all ages of the world there has been a tendency to set apart certain days, places, and occasions for worship, and to think those were the chief realms in which religion was to act. Now, holy days and holy places have their importance. They give opportunity for especial performance of Christian duty, and for regaling of the religious appetite; but they cannot take the place of continuous exercise of faith and prayer. In other words: a man cannot be so much of a Christian on Sunday, that he can afford to be a worldling all the rest of the week. If a steamer put out for Southampton, and go one day in that direction and the other six days go in other directions, how long will it take the steamer to get to Southampton? It will never get there. And though a man may seem to be voyaging heavenward during the holy Sabbath day, if, during the following six days of the week, he is going towards the world, and towards the flesh, and towards the devil, he will never ride up into the peaceful harbour of heaven. You cannot eat so much at the Sabbath banquet that you can afford religious abstinence the other six days. Heroism and princely behaviour on great occasions are no apology for lack of right demeanour in circumstances insignificant and inconspicuous. The genuine Christian life is not spasmodic; does not go by fits and starts. It toils on through heat and cold, up steep mountains and along dangerous declivities, its eye on the everlasting hills crowned with the castles of the blessed!

I propose, this morning, to make a plea in behalf of what I shall call "every-day religion."

In the first place, we want to bring the religion of Christ into our *every-day conversation*. When a dam breaks, and two or three villages in Massachusetts are overwhelmed, or an earthquake in South America swallows down a whole city, then people begin to talk about the uncertainty of life, and they imagine that they are engaged in positively religious conversation. No. You may talk about these things and have no grace of God at all in your heart. We ought every day to be talking religion. If there is anything glorious about it, anything beautiful about it, anything important about it, we ought to be continuously speaking about it. I have noticed that men, just in proportion as their Christian experience is shallow, talk about funerals, and grave-yards and tombstones, and death-beds. The real, genuine Christian man talks chiefly about this life, and the great eternity beyond, and not so much about the insignificant pass between these two residences. And yet how few circles there are where the religion of Jesus Christ is welcome. Go into a circle, even of Christian people, where they are full of joy and hilarity, and talk about Christ or heaven, and everything is immediately silenced. As on a summer-day, when the forests are full of life, chatter, and chirrup, and carol—a mighty chorus of bird-harmony, every tree branch an orchestra—if a hawk appear in the sky every voice stops and the forests are still; just so I have seen a lively, religious circle silenced on the appearance of anything like religious conversation.

NO ONE HAD ANYTHING TO SAY, save, perhaps, some old patriarch in the corner of the room, who really thinks that something ought to be said, under the circumstances; so he puts one foot over the other, and heaves a long sigh, and says: "O yes, that's so; that's so!"

My friends, the religion of Jesus Christ is something to talk about with a glad heart. It is brighter than the waters; it is more cheerful than the sunshine. Do not go around about, groaning about that religion, when you ought to be singing it or talking it in cheerful tones of voice. How often it is that we find men whose lives are utterly inconsistent, who attempt to talk religion and always make a failure of it. My friends, we must *live* religion or we cannot talk it. If a man is cranky, and cross, and uncongenial, and hard in his dealings, and then begins to talk about Christ and heaven, everybody is repelled by it. Yet I have sometimes heard such men say, in whining tones: "We are miserable sinners. The Lord bless you; the Lord have mercy on you;"—their conversation interlarded with such expressions, which mean nothing but canting; and canting is the worst form of hypocrisy. If we have really felt the religion of Christ in our hearts, let us talk it, and talk it with an illuminated countenance, remembering that when two Christian people talk, God gives special attention, and writes down what they say. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written." (Mal. iii. 16).

Again, I remark: we must bring the religion of Christ into our *every-day employments*. "Oh," you say, "that is very well if a man handle large sums of money, or if he has an extensive traffic; it is very well for this importer of silks, for the bankers and shippers, for the Rothschilds and the Barings; but in my thread and needle store, in my trimming establishment, in the humble work in life that I am called to, the sphere is too small for the action of such grand, heavenly principles." Who told you so? Do you know that God watches the faded leaf on the brook's surface as certainly as He does the path of a blazing sun? And the moss that creeps up the side of the rock makes as much im-



pression upon God's mind as the waving tops of Oregon pine and Lebanon cedar; and the alder, crackling under the cow's hoof, sounds as loud in God's ear as the snap of a world's conflagration. When you have anything to do in life, however humble it may seem to be, God is always there to help you to do it. If your work is that of a fisherman, then God will help you as He helped Simon when he dragged Genesaret. If your work is drawing water, then He will help you as when He talked at the well-curb to the Samaritan woman. If you are engaged in the Custom House, He will lead you as He led Matthew sitting at the receipt of customs. A religion that is not good in *one* place, is not worth anything in another place. The man who has only a day's wages in his pocket, as certainly needs the guidance of religion, as he who rattles the keys of a bank and could abscond with a hundred thousand hard dollars.

There are those prominent in the churches, who seem to be, on public occasions, very devout, who do not put the principles of Christ's religion into practice. They are the most inexorable of creditors. They are the most grasping of dealers. They are known as clever men of business. They fleece every sheep they can catch. A country merchant comes in to buy Spring or Fall goods, and he gets into the store of one of these professed Christian men, who have really no grace in their hearts, and he is completely taken in. He is so overcome, that he cannot get out of town during the week. He stays in town over Sunday, goes into some church to get Christian consolation, when what is his amazement to find that the very man who hands him the poor-box in the church, is the one who relieved him of his money. But, never mind;

#### THE DEACON HAS HIS BLACK COAT ON

now. He looks solemn, and goes home talking about "the

mon." If the wheat in the churches should be hopper, the first turn of the crank would make ly, I tell you. Some of these men are great stick-spel preaching. They say: "You stand there in surplice, and preach, preach like an angel, and nd out here and attend to business. Don't mix on't get business and religion in the same bucket. d to your matters and we will attend to ours." ot know that God sees every cheat they have prac- e last six years; that he can look through the iron ir fire-proof safe; that he has counted every disenback they have in their pocket, and that a day nt will come. These inconsistent Christian men the Sabbath-night in the house of God, singing, se of the service: "Rock of Ages Cleft for Me," when the benediction is pronounced, shut the pew say as they go out: "Good bye, religion; I'll be Sunday."

that the Church of God and the Sabbath are only y where we are to get weapons. When war comes, wants to fight for his country he does not go to pringfield to do battling, but he goes there for d muskets. I look upon the Church of Christ and th day as only the place where we are to get armed ian conflict, but the battle-field is on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. in's," and "Lenox," and "Old Hundred" do not anything unless they sing all the week. A sermon unless we can take it with us behind the plough ounter. The Sabbath day is worthless if it last ty-four hours.

re many Christians who say: "We are willing to , but we do not want to do it in these spheres about are talking—it seems so insipid and monotonous.

If we had some great occasion, if we had lived in the time of Luther, if we had been Paul's travelling companion, if we could serve God on a great scale, we would do it; but we can't in this every-day life." I admit that a great deal of the romance and knight-errantry of life has disappeared before the advance of this practical age. The ancient temples of Rouen have been changed into storehouses and smithies. The residences of poets and princes have been turned into brokers' shops. The classic mansion of Ashland has been cut up into walking-sticks. The groves where the poets said the gods dwelt have been carted out for firewood. The muses that we used to read about have disappeared before the emigrant's axe and the trapper's gun, and a Vermont farmer can go over the Alleghany and Rocky Mountains and never see an oroad or a sylph; and that man who is waiting for a life betwixed of wonders will never find it. There is, however, a field for endurance and great achievement; but it is in every-day life. There are Alps to scale, there are Hellesponts to swim, there are fires to brave; but they are all around us now. This is the hardest kind of martyrdom to bear. It took grace to lead Latimer and Ridley through the fire triumphantly when their armed enemies and their friends were looking on; but

#### IT REQUIRES MORE GRACE NOW

to bring men through persecution when nobody is looking on. I could show you in this city a woman who has had rheumatism for twenty years, who has endured more suffering and exhausted more grace than would have made twenty martyrs pass triumphantly through the fire. If you are not faithful in an insignificant position in life, you would not be faithful in a grand mission. If you cannot stand the bite of a midge, how could you endure the breath of a basilisk?

Do not think that any work God gives you to do in the

is on too small a scale for you to do. The whole world is not ashamed to take care of one little daisy. I see you are doing down here in the grass, you poor daisy? Are you not afraid at night? You will be cold, you will die of thirst, you will not be fed. Poor daisy!" "No," says a star, "I'll watch over it to-

"No," says a cloud, "I'll give it drink." "No," says the sun, "I'll warm it in my bosom." Then I see the clouds going, and the clouds are drawing water, and I say: "Are you doing there, O clouds?" And they reply: "We are giving drink to that daisy." Then the wind rises, comes bending down the wheat and sounding its psalm in the forest, and I cry: "Whither away on such swift wind?" And it replies: "We are going to cool the face of that daisy." And then I bow down and say: "Will you take care of the grass of the field?" And a flower at once responds: "Yes; He clothes the lilies of the field, and never yet has forgotten me, a poor little daisy." Oh! I see the great heavens bending themselves to what insignificant ministration, when I find out that God does not forget any blossom of the spring or any snowflake in winter, I come to the conclusion that we can afford to take care of the minute things in life, and that what we do we do well, since there is as much perfection in the construction of a spider's eye as in the conformation of the galaxies. Plato had a fable which I have now nearly forgotten, but it ran something like this: He said spirits of another world came back to this world to find a body and a sphere of work. One spirit came and took the body of a king and did his work. Another spirit came and took the body of a poet and did his work. After a while Ulysses came and he said: "Why, all the fine bodies are taken, and the grand work is taken. There is nothing left for me." Then one replied: "Ah! the best one has been left for

you." Ulysses said: "What's that?" And the reply was: "The body of a common man, doing a common work, and for a common reward." A good fable for the world, and just as good a fable for the Church. Whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, let us do it to the glory of God.

Again, we need to bring the religion of Christ into our *every-day trials*. For severe losses, for bereavement, for trouble that shocks like an earthquake and that blasts like a storm, we prescribe religious consolation; but, business man, for the small annoyances of last week, how much of the grace of God did you apply? "Oh!" you say: "these trials are too small for such application." My brother, they are shaping your character, they are souring your temper, they are wearing out your patience, and they are making you less and less of a man. I go into a sculptor's studio, and see him shaping a statue. He has a chisel in one hand and a mallet in the other, and he gives a very gentle stroke—click, click, click! I say: "Why don't you strike harder?" "Oh!" he replies, "that would shatter the statue. I can't do it that way; I must do it this way." So he works on, and after a while the features come out, and everybody that enters the studio is charmed and fascinated. Well, God has your soul under process of development, and it is the little annoyances and vexations of life that are chiselling out your immortal nature. It is click, click, click. I wonder why some great Providence does not come and with one stroke prepare you for heaven. Ah! no. God says that is not the way. And so He keeps on by strokes of little annoyances, little sorrows, little vexations, until at last you shall be a glad spectacle for angels and for men. You know that a large fortune may be spent in small change, and a vast amount of moral character may go away in small depletion. It is

## THE LITTLE TROUBLES OF LIFE

having more effect upon you than great ones. A flock of locusts will kill a grain-field sooner than the incurable disease of three or four cattle. You say: "Since I lost my money I lost my property, I have been a different man." I do not recognise the architecture of little annoyances that are hewing, digging, cutting, shaping, splitting, derailing your moral qualities. Rats may sink a ship. One lucifer match may send destruction through a store-houses. Catherine de Medicis got her death by smelling a poisonous rose. Columbus, by stopping for a piece of bread and a drink of water at a Spanish convent, was led to the discovery of a new world. There is an intimate connection between trifles and realities, between nothings and everything. Be careful to let none of those annoyances go through unarraigned. Compel them to administer to your wealth. The scratch of a sixpenny nail sometimes produces a lock-jaw, and the clip of a most infinitesimal annoyance may nag you for ever. Do not let any annoyance or persecution cross your soul without its making you better. The National Government does not think it belittling to tax on pins, and a tax on buckles, and a tax on shoes. Individual taxes do not amount to much, but in the aggregate to millions and millions of dollars. And I would you, oh Christian man, put a high tariff on every vice and vexation that comes through your soul. This may not amount to much, in single cases, but in the aggregate it would be a great revenue of spiritual strength and satisfaction. A bee can suck honey even out of a nettle, if you have the grace of God in your heart, you can get wisdom out of that which would otherwise irritate and destroy. A returned missionary told me that a company of men rowing up the Ganges were stung to death by

flies that infest that region at certain seasons : I have seen the earth strewn with the carcasses of men slain by insect annoyances. The only way to get prepared for the great troubles of life is to conquer these small troubles. What would you say of a soldier who refused to load his gun or to go into the conflict because it was only a skirmish, saying: "I am not going to expend my ammunition on a skirmish—wait until there comes a general engagement, and then you will see how courageous I am, and what battling I will do." The general would say to such a man: "If you are not faithful in a skirmish, you would be nothing in a general engagement." And I have to tell you, oh Christian men, if you cannot apply the principles of Christ's religion on a small scale, you will never be able to apply them on a large scale. If you cannot successfully contend against these small sorrows that come down single-handed, what will you do when the greater disasters of life come with thundering artillery, rolling over your soul?

Again we must bring the religion of Christ into our *every-day blessings*. When the autumn comes and the harvests are in, and the governors make proclamation, we assemble in churches and we are very thankful. But every day ought to be a thanksgiving day. We do not recognize the common mercies of life. We have to see a blind man led by his dog, before we begin to bethink ourselves of what a grand thing it is to have eyesight. We have to see some one afflicted with St. Vitus' dance, before we are ready to thank God for the control of our physical energies. We have to see some wounded man hobbling on his crutch, or with his empty coat sleeve pinned up, before we learn to think

#### WHAT A GRAND THING GOD DID FOR US

when He gave us healthy use of our limbs. We are so stupid that nothing but the misfortunes of others can rouse

our blessings. As the ox grazes in the pasture, up  
res in clover, yet never thinking who makes the  
id as the bird picks up the worm from the furrow,  
ing that it is God who makes everything from the  
æ in the sod to the seraph on the throne—so we  
ing, drinking, and enjoying, but never thanking, or  
hanking; or, if thanking at all, with only half a  
compared our indifference to the brute; but per-  
onged the brute. I do not know but that among  
instincts it may have an instinct by which it recog-  
Divine hand that feeds it. I do not know but that  
hrough it, holding communication with what we  
ational creation." The cow that stands at this  
ler the willow by the water course, chewing its cud,  
r thankful; and who can tell how much a bird  
its song? The aroma of the flowers smells like  
nd mist arising from the river looks like the smoke  
ning sacrifice. Oh, that we were as responsive!  
thanks God for the water that gushes up the well  
foams in the cascade, and that laughs over the  
d that patters in the shower, and that claps its  
the sea? Who thanks God for the air, the foun-  
ie, the bridge of sunbeams, the path of sound, the  
on a hot summer's day. Who thanks God for this  
l physical organism—this sweep of the vision, this  
harmony struck into the ear, this soft tread of a  
slights over the nervous tissue, this rolling of the  
ide through artery and vein, this drumming of the  
our march to immortality. We take all these  
; a matter of course. But suppose God should  
these common blessings? Your body would  
n inquisition of torture, the cloud would refuse  
y green thing would crumple up, and the earth would  
n under your feet. The air *would* cease its health-



ful circulation, pestilence would swoop, and every house would become a place of skulls. Streams would first swim with vermin and then dry up; and thirst, and hunger, and anguish, and despair would lift their sceptres. Oh, compare such a life as that with the life you live to-day, and the life that you lived this morning with your families about you! Is it not time that with every word of our lips and with every action of our life, we began to acknowledge these every-day mercies? Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." Do I address a man or a woman this morning, who has not rendered to God one single offering of thanks?

I was preaching one Thanksgiving Day, and announced my text: "Oh give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endureth for ever." I do not know whether there was any blessing on the sermon or not; but the text went straight to a young man's heart who sits in this assembly to-day. He said to himself as I read the text "Oh give thanks unto the Lord for he is good," "Why, I have never rendered Him any thanks. Oh what an ingrate I have been." Can it be, my brother, that you have been fed by the good hand of God all these days, that you have had clothing, and shelter, and all beneficent surroundings, and yet have never offered your heart to God. Oh, let a sense of the Divine goodness shown you in the every-day blessings melt your heart, and if you have never before uttered one earnest note of thanksgiving, let this be the day which shall hear your song. What I say to one, I say to all of this audience. Take this practical religion I have recommended into your every-day life.

**MAKE EVERY DAY A SABBATH,**

and every meal a sacrament, and every room you enter a Holy of Holies. We all have work to do, let us be willing

We all have sorrows to bear, let us cheerfully  
 . We all have battles to fight, let us courageously  
 1. If you want to die right, you must live right.  
 e and indolence will win the hiss of everlasting  
 le faithfulness will gather its garlands, and wave  
 , and sit upon its throne, long after this earth has  
 es, and eternal ages have begun their march. You  
 o-day and attend to your little sphere of duties. I  
 me and attend to my little sphere of duties. Every  
 own place. So our every step in life shall be a  
 march, and the humblest foot-stool on which we  
 to sit will be a conqueror's throne.

### THE CRIMSON COAT.

this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from  
 s that is glorious in his apparel travelling in the greatness of  
 .”—*Isaiah* lxi. 1.

and Bozrah having been the scene of fierce  
 tle, when those words are used here or in any  
 of the Bible, they are figures of speech setting  
 es of severe conflict. As now we often use the  
 erloo to describe a decisive contest of any kind, so  
 Bozrah and Edom in this text are figures of speech  
 e of a scene of great slaughter. Whatever else  
 et may have meant to describe, he most certainly  
 depict the Lord Jesus Christ saying: "Who is  
 cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from  
 ravelling in the greatness of his strength?"  
 a general is about to go out to the wars, a flag and  
 are publicly presented to him, and the maidens  
 vers, and the young men load the cannon, and the  
 ts amid a huzzah that drowns the thunder of the

wheels and the shriek of the whistle. But all this will give no idea of the excitement that there must have been in heaven when Christ started out on the campaign of the world's conquest. If they could have foreseen the siege that would be laid to Him, and the maltreatment He would suffer, and the burdens He would have to carry, and the battles He would have to fight, I think there would have been a million volunteers in heaven who would have insisted on coming along with Him ; but no, they only accompanied Him to the gate, their last shout heard clear down to the earth, the space between the two worlds bridged with a great hosanna. You know there is a wide difference between a man's going off to battle and coming back again. When he goes off, it is with epaulettes untangled, with banner unspecked, with horses sleek and shining from the groom. All that there is of struggle and pain is to come yet. So it was with Christ. He had not yet fought a battle. He was starting out, and though this world did not give Him a warm-hearted greeting, there was a gentle mother, who folded Him in her arms; and a babe finds no difference between a stable and a palace—between courtiers and camel-drivers. As Jesus stepped on the stage of this world, it was amid angelic shouts in the galleries and amid the kindest maternal ministrations. But soon hostile forces began to gather. They deployed from the Sanhedrim. They were detailed from the standing army. They came out from the Cæsarean castles. The vagabonds in the street joined the gentlemen of the mansion. Spirits rode up from hell, and in long array there came a force together that threatened to put to rout this newly-arrived One from heaven. Jesus now seeing the battle gathering, lifted His own standard; but who gathered about it? How feeble the recruits. A few shoremen, a blind beggar, a woman with an alabaster box, another woman with two mites, and a group of friendless, money-

less, and positionless people came to His standard. What chance was there for Him? Nazareth against Him. Bethlehem against Him. Capernaum against Him. Jerusalem against Him. Galilee against Him. The courts against Him. The army against Him. The throne against Him. The world against Him. All hell against Him. No wonder they asked Him to surrender. But

#### HE COULD NOT SURRENDER.

He could not apologize, He could not take any back steps. He had come to strike for the deliverance of an enslaved race, and He must do the work. Then they sent out their pickets to watch Him. They saw in what house He went, and when He came out. They watched what He ate and who with; what He drank and how much. They did not dare to make their final assault, for they knew not but that behind Him there might be a reinforcement that was not seen. But at last the battle came. It was to be more fierce than Bozrah, more bloody than Gettysburgh, involving more than Austerlitz, more combatants employed than at Chalons, a ghastlier conflict than all the battles of earth put together, though Edmund Burke's estimate of thirty-five thousand millions of the slain be accurate. The day was Friday. The hour was between twelve and three o'clock. The field was a slight hillock north-west of Jerusalem. The force engaged, were earth and hell joined as allies on one side, and heaven, represented by a solitary inhabitant, on the other. The hour came. Oh! what a time it was! I think that that day the universe looked on. The spirits that could be spared from the heavenly temple, and could get conveyance of wing or chariot, came down from above, and spirits getting furlough from furnaces beneath came up; and they listened, and they looked, and they watched. Oh! what an uneven battle! Two worlds armed on one side; an unarmed

man on the other. The German regiment at that time stationed at Jerusalem began the attack. They knew how to fight, for they belonged to the most thoroughly drilled army of the world. With spears glittering in the sun, they charged up the hill. The horses prance and rear amid the excitement of the populace, the heels of the riders plunge in the flanks, urging them on. The weapons begin to tell on Christ. See how faint He looks. There, the blood starts and there, and there, and there. If He is to have reinforcements, let Him call them up now. No; He must do this work alone—alone. He is dying. Feel yourself of the wrist; the pulse is feebler. Feel under the arm; the warmth is less. He is dying. Aye, they pronounce Him dead. And just at that moment that they pronounced Him dead, He rallied, and from His wounds He unsheathed a weapon which staggered the Roman legions down the hill, and hurled the Satanic battalions into the pit. It was a weapon of love—infinite love, all-conquering love. Mightier than javelin or spear, it triumphed over all. Put back, ye armies of earth and hell! The tide of battle turns. Jesus hath overcome. Let the people stand apart and make a line, that He may pass down from Calvary to Jerusalem, and thence on and out all around the world. The battle is fought. The victory is achieved. The triumphal march is begun. Hark! to the hoofs of the warrior's steed, and the tramping of a great multitude, for He has many friends now. The Hero of earth and heaven advances. Cheer! cheer! "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, travelling in the greatness of His strength?"

We behold here a new revelation of a blessed and startling fact. People talk of Christ as though He were going to do something grand for us after awhile. He has done it. People talk as though ten or twenty years from now, in

the closing hours of our life, or in some terrible pass of life, Jesus will help us. He has done the work already. He did it eighteen hundred and forty-one years ago. You might as well talk of Washington as though he were going to achieve our national independence in 1950, as to speak of Christ as though He were going to achieve our salvation in the future. He did it in the year of our Lord 33, eighteen hundred and forty-one years ago, on the field of Bozrah, the captain of our salvation fighting unto death for your and my emancipation. All we have to do is to accept that fact in our heart of hearts, and we are free for this world, and we are free for the world to come. But lest we might not accept it, Christ comes through here to-night, "travelling in the greatness of His strength," not to tell you that He is going to fight for you some battle in the future, but to tell you that

THE BATTLE IS ALREADY FOUGHT,

and the victory already won.

You have noticed that when soldiers come home from the wars, they carry on their flags the names of the battle-fields where they were distinguished. The Englishman coming back has on his banner Inkermann and Balaklava; the Frenchman, Jeda and Eylau; the German, Versailles and Sedan. And Christ has on the banner He carries as conqueror the names of ten thousand battle-fields He won for you and for me. He rides past all our homes of bereavement—by the door-bell swathed in sorrow, by the wardrobe black with woe, by the dismantled fortresses of our strength. Come out and greet Him to-night, O ye people! See the names of all the battle-fields on His flag. Ye who are poor, read on this ensign the story of Christ's hard crusts and pillowless head. Ye who are persecuted read here of the ruffians who chased His first breath to His last. Mighty to soothe your troubles, mighty to tread down your foes,

"travelling in the greatness of His strength." Though His horse be brown with the dust of the march, and the fetlock be wet with the carnage, and the bit be red with the blood of your spiritual foes, He comes up to-night, not exhausted from the battle, but fresh as when He went into it—coming up from Bozrah, "travelling in the greatness of His strength."

You know that when Augustus, and Constantine, and Trajan, and Titus came back from the wars, what a time there was. You know they came on horseback or in chariots, and there were trophies before and there were captives behind, and there were people shouting on all sides, and there were garlands flung from the window, and over the highway a triumphal arch was sprung. The solid masonry to-day at Beneventum, Rimini, and Rome still tell their admiration for those heroes. And shall we to-night let our Conqueror go by, without lifting any acclaim? Have we not flowers red enough to depict the carnage, white enough to celebrate the victory, fragrant enough to breathe the joy? Those men of whom I just spoke dragged their victims at the chariot-wheels; but Christ, our Lord, takes those who once were captives and invites them into His chariot to ride, while He puts around them the arm of His strength, saying: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, and the waters shall not drown it, and the fires shall not burn it, and eternity shall not exhaust it."

If this be true, I cannot see how any man can carry his sorrows a great while. If this Conqueror from Bozrah is going to beat back all your griefs, why not trust Him? A bigot, on the battle-field, said to a dying soldier: "Of what persuasion are you?" He looked up and said: "What persuasion? I am persuaded that neither height, nor depth, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, shall separate me from the love of

God, in Christ Jesus my Lord." Oh! do you not feel, under this Gospel to-night, your griefs falling back, and your tears drying up, as you hear the tramp of a thousand illustrious promises led on by the Conqueror from Bozrah, "travelling, travelling in the greatness of His strength."

On that Friday which the Episcopal Church rightly celebrates, calling it "Good Friday," your soul and mine were contended for. On that day Jesus proved Himself mightier than earth and hell, and when the lances struck Him He gathered them up into a sheaf, as a reaper gathers the grain, and He stacked them. Mounting the horse of the Apocalypse,

HE RODE DOWN THROUGH THE AGES,

"travelling in the greatness of His strength." On that day your sin and mine perished, if we will only believe it.

There may be some one in the house who may say: "I don't like the colour of this conqueror's garments. You tell me that his garments were not only spattered with the blood of the conflict, but also that they were soaked, that they were saturated, that they were dyed in it." I admit it. You say you do not like that. Then I quote to you two passages of Scripture: Hebrews, Ninth and Twenty-second: "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission." Leviticus, Seventeenth and Eleventh: "In the blood is the atonement." But it was not your blood. It was His own. Not only enough to redden His garments and to redden the horse, but enough to wash away the sins of the world. Oh, the blood on His brow, the blood on His hands, the blood on His feet, the blood on His side! It seems as if an artery must have been cut:

"There is a fountain filled with blood  
Drawn from Emmanuel's veins,  
And sinners plunged beneath that flood  
Lose all their guilty stains."



Some of our modern theologians who want to give God lessons about the best way to save the world, tell us they do not want any blood in their redemption. They want to take the horse by the bit, and hurl him back on his haunches, and tell this rider from Bozrah to go around some other way. Look out lest ye fall under the flying hoofs of this horse; lest ye go down under the sword of this Conqueror from Bozrah. What meant the blood of the pigeons in the old dispensation; the blood of the bullock; the blood of the heifer; the blood of the lamb? It meant to prophecy the cleansing blood, the pardoning blood, the healing blood of this Conqueror who comes up from Bozrah, to-night, "travelling in the greatness of His strength." No interest in that blood and you die. It was shed for you if you will accept it; it will plead trumpet-tongued against you if you refuse it. I catch a handful of the red torrent that rushes out from the heart of the Lord, and I throw it over this audience, hoping that one drop of its cleansing power may come upon your soul. Oh, Jesus, in that crimson tide wash my poor soul! We need it! We die! We die! We accept Thy sacrifice! Conqueror of Bozrah, have mercy upon us! We throw our garments in the way! We fall into line! Ride on, Jesus, ride on! "Travelling, travelling in the greatness of Thy strength."

But after awhile the returning Conqueror will reach the gate, and all the armies of the saved will be with Him. I hope you will be there, and I will be there. As we go through the gate and around about the throne for the review, "a great multitude that no man can number"—all heaven can tell without asking, right away, which one is Jesus, not only because of the brightness of His face, but because while all the other inhabitants in glory are robed in white—saints in white, cherubim in white, seraphim in white—*His* robes shall be scarlet, even the dyed garments of

I catch a glimpse of that triumphant joy, but the sun and shuts so quickly, I can hear only half a sentence it is this : "*Unto Him who hath washed us in His*

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## DROWNED IN THE LAKE.

"The deep that coucheth beneath."—*Deut.* xxxiii. 13.

SWITZERLAND has the glaciers of Mont Blanc as a crown for her brow, and Lake Geneva for an emerald right hand. On the Swiss railway we are told that we look out for the bridge where, as he emerges, there dashes upon the eye of the traveller one of the most marvellous scenes of beauty and grandeur in all Europe. A twinkling of an eye appears Lausanne, seated on her three hills, with twenty-one thousand population ; a cathedral, nine hundred years old, with apsed chapels and antique capitals ; her museums, distinguished the more for the finest specimens in minerals, and animals, and fish ; her terraces and gardens bewitching with splendour and luxuriance ; her schools which, by the rarest facility for culture, invite the youth of America and of the world ; Lake Geneva, deep, yet the clearest of waters, filled by steamers, crowded with passengers from all parts, and fishing-smacks here and there hauling out trout, perch, and salmon ; and sail-boats going out to the castles on the beach occupied by gentlemen of fortune.

This sheet of water, skirted by mountains, Jura and Alps, some green with verdure, some white with snow, the cleft with streams, crystalline and arrowy, the mouth of the floods emptying into this great bowl of the sea. On the banks of this lake Gibson, Rousseau, and Wordsworth studied, and Byron dramatized, and John Kemble,

the tragedian, lies buried, and Rothschild built his mansion, and ten thousand men and women, far better than any I have mentioned, have gone up and down, adoring the God who lifted the hills and sank this great inland sea. May you all live to behold the Alps, cloud-turbaned, looking down into the mirror of beautiful Geneva !

A few days ago, two lads of our own city, and much of the time of our own congregation, pushed out from Lausanne, on those exquisite waters, on a pleasure excursion. It was in the leisure of school hours. A sudden storm swept over the lake, capsizing that boat, or there was a defect in the vessel, and those precious lives were emptied into a watery grave. You say that they ought not to have gone where there was danger. I reply, where will you go and find no danger. You go down the street, a scaffold may fall on you. You go to the park, the horses may become unmanageable. You take the train, a switch-man may turn the track the wrong way. You stay at home, the lightning may strike through the roof, or miasma may come in through the open window. Dangers stand round us everywhere, to press us to the tomb.

There is great health for a student in rowing oar, and great exhilaration in the spreading of the sail ; but the lake that you stroke and fondle, thinking it harmless and asleep, sometimes proves treacherous to the yacht, and springs upon it like a panther, clutching it down with wrathful, overmastering strength. So that Moses, in the text, graphically and truthfully describes the fatal slyness of river, and lake, and sea, when he says : "*The deep that coucheth beneath.*"

The particulars of that sad event have not yet come to us ; but never, through the coral waves of the Atlantic, and amid the gardens of sea-weed, and along by the hulks of the wrecked shipping, did a more fearful message travel the submarine cable than that which came last week, announcing that John and James Crane, two American students at Lau-

anne, Switzerland, had ended their mortal life in Lake Geneva. Such a transition is the easiest and most painless of all modes of getting out of this life. After one minute of submergence, generally, consciousness is gone. The Navarino sponge-divers cannot bear to stay under the water more than two minutes, notwithstanding all their experience; and yet persons who have been resuscitated tell us that the mind at such a time acts with wonderful velocity; and so I suppose these dear lads had time to think of home, and the sadness of the parental hearts whom they expected to join next October.

GOD DECREED OTHERWISE,

and may His omnipotent grace soothe the bereaved and the desolate.

There is in this event that I am called to speak about to-night, a new illustration of a very old lesson. You tell me nothing but a stereotyped thing when you tell me of life's uncertainty. I have heard that a thousand times from ministers, and prayer-meeting talkers, and Sabbath-school teachers, and when you make that announcement, I open my eyes no wider, nor does my heart beat quicker; but when you tell me that a boat flung two beloved lads into a watery grave, then I am stunned by the telegram and compelled to read the truth written by pen of lightning strengthened up from under the sea. How quickly our life comes and how soon it goes! We pass along a perilous cliff, and we almost hold our breath, and balance ourself lest we fall off, and getting beyond the pass, we thank God for our deliverance, but perhaps lie down and die in the smooth plain beneath. Many a man has gone through three or four battles undipped of bullet or sabre, who has had his life at last dashed out on the icy pavement in front of his doorstep, or by the snapping of whiffletree. You go two thousand miles in an express train unharmed, to lose your life at the hands

of a reckless flyman in your own village. These two lads of whom I am speaking, went through three thousand miles of stormy Atlantic unharmed, to find their death on a lake that they might sail across in thirty minutes. When we picture our exit from this world, we are very apt to think of a soft couch and a shaded room, and careful attendants; but multitudes of us who are here to-night will never have anything like that. It will be a rush and a plunge, and a leap, and a fall, and the world flashes out and eternity flashes in.

You tell me that this lesson of life's uncertainty is appropriate only for the old, for the emaciated, for the sick. Ah, no, these lads did not come crawling down to the boat, they did not come on crutches, they were not fagged out. They came bounding into the boat, elastic, ruddy, robust. They expected to live seventy years. Their lungs sound, their hearts beating with healthful pulsation, their limbs lithe, their clear eye taking in the sheen of wave, and the frown of crag, and the azure of sky, they sprang to their places in the prow or stern with shout and laughter. They had no premonition that they were to go. So, my friends, it will be with many of us. You pay a certain amount of money, premium for life insurance, that when you are gone your family may get relief from it; but what life insurance company would dare to say to a man: "You will live a year," or "you will live six months," or "you will live a week," or "you will live a day," or "you will live an hour," or "you will live a second"—and warrant it? I come to this platform to-night, strong and well, but that is no assurance that I shall go off alive. To-morrow morning you cross the ferry in good health; that is no assurance that you will come back without being helped. Our physical organism is such a delicate, intricate, elaborate piece of Divine mechanism, that if but the little finger of disaster touch it too roughly,

## IT CRUSHES INTO RUIN.

as if to show that you cannot depend upon the physiological appearances, lets some invalid crawl on to eighty-five of age, kept up by tonics and plasters, and helped by wheels, and ear trumpets, and canes, while there are youths, muscular, roundly developed, and athletic, who lead under apoplectic stroke. Feel in your pockets and bring me out, if you can, a document rightly signed and warranted you to get through this night alive. I plunged into Lake Geneva, the river Rhone. It came on with swift uproar, and you could tell some distance back that I was coming on to that plunge. But who can tell at what moment, at what day, the river of our life shall empty into the deep, wide, infinite future? All the heavy shipping that comes out of New York, goes through the "Narrows," but at a different tack, to what different harbours.

One of the most fascinating excursions in Switzerland is to the castle Chalons, in the midst of those very Genevan mountains. History and poetry tell us that Bonivard, the hero, was chained in that castle six years, and you can see the bolt-hole where he was fastened, and the circular depression in the ground where he tramped about. After awhile, a miracle came down, and he was freed; but he heard them cheering before his shout of deliverance mingled with their shout of victory. Yet here, my friends, we go tramping and wandering in this earthly prison-house, chained to a body from which we cannot get free, not knowing at what moment the trumpet of the great future may break in upon us to shatter the manacles of flesh and disendungeon our immortal souls, until the prisoner of Chalons shall become the victor over the skies.

Do you not feel that we walk amid a vast uncertainty, not knowing what peril may swoop from above, or what deep danger be couching beneath? Suppose you had been with

those boys in that boat, would you have been ready? It was well for them that they were children of the Covenant, "I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee," and that they were praying boys, in their Brooklyn home, kneeling down with their mother and praying aloud, not ashamed to let the world hear any more than to let God hear. Oh, when the boat became unmanageable, and they were trying to haul in sail, they would not have had so good an opportunity for spiritual preparation as they had in their calm Brooklyn home, where they were not ashamed to acknowledge Jesus. Many of you will go out of life just as suddenly. Whether by flood, or fire, or earthquake, or lightning flash, or colliding rail trains, or a fatal slip on an orange peeling in the street, I know not; but you will have then no time to repent, and you will have then no time to pray. If all the churches and cathedrals of the world should then go crying unto God in your behalf, it would not do you any good. All the preparation a man makes for the great future, he has to make this side the sharp line that divides the two residences.

I see in this event that hilarity and gladness cannot keep back the fatal attack. When three or four students are together, and in such a tonic and exhilarating air as that of Switzerland, there is mirth and exuberance unbounded. They did not see the soft paws of the wave reaching up around the gilded boat, nor did they imagine that the deep lay couched beneath ready to spring upon them. I believe in mirth, and in boating, and in pleasure excursions; but I want you to understand that gladness and hilarity of surrounding cannot keep back our last moment. It may come treading over rose-leaves; it may come keeping step to the thrum of the harp, while hands are clapping, while feet are bounding, while all sails are set over a glassy sea. So it came when the *Arctic* and the *Vesta*, mid-Atlantic, struck.

came when the *Austria* burned on the high seas. So it when Richmond Court House fell. So it came when *Ville du Havre* sank. "In such a day, and in such an as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh." Oh!

## THIS BELL OF WARNING

rings to-night has not attached to it a short rope that sexton may seize, but a twisted strand of wire three hundred miles long, and the red fingers of the lightning it until it rings from continent to continent: "What and findeth to do, do it with all thy might, for there is no power nor knowledge, nor wisdom, nor device in the grave where we are all hastening." What a voice for the youth of the congregation—the voice that comes from Lake Geneva to-night! Young people do not like anything dull or stupid. I do not blame them for that; but there is something tame in this event. It comes with a thrill, and it is that your body, and mind, and soul must feel the shock. They had every prospect of living. Just look at their features. See what broad shoulders they had, what stout arms, what ruddy cheeks, what grand foreheads. Oh! you say if they had only known how to swim, it would have been all right. They could swim; they could outswim you. They were as familiar with the water as many with the land. They were splendid swimmers. Their father had taught them how to take this exercise. But they were too far from shore, or the boom struck them, and they are gone. They could not pluck to stand up against a lake one thousand feet deep. Their father, who had often been with them on the lake, was not there. He could give them no relief. But I tell you that He who walked Lake Genessaret walked Lake Geneva, and that they are safe. O man! O woman; when the last moment comes, you want something more than a strong arm to help you. No one but Jesus then; no one but Jesus now.



They had brilliant prospects. In Germany, in Paris, and in Switzerland they had studied, at the fountain head, those languages through which come so much of the culture and refinement of the world. The gates of knowledge and of success were open before them ; but they died at the gates, and all the plans for earthly welfare ended then and there. My hearers, do not build too much upon this world. It is a glassy surface with a thousand feet of graves beneath. Do you think you can sail that craft, and clew down the topsail yards, and haul out the reef tackles ? A sudden squall may come, and you may go down, unless there be a Christ sleeping in the hinder part of the ship, ready in the nick of time to rise up and hush the wind and silence the sea. I believe the Son of God was in that tossing boat, and that when these lads cried out in their extremity : "Master, save us, we perish"—I think then and there He came to their spiritual and immortal rescue.

Let us pray God He will comfort those who are waiting for more minute tidings of this event. The tongue of the cable seems to have been palsied with the tidings, and it does not talk plainly. I wish their bodies might be found. It would be a satisfaction, though a sad satisfaction, to have them here in one of our own cemeteries. As the mother said to me a few hours ago, it would seem like tucking them away in bed safely for the night. But if God shall deny these parents this, it will make no difference to the lads, and the archangel's trumpet that wakes up the sea will wake up also the lake. And, after all, they can find no grander place to sleep than where they are sleeping now, the shadows of Jura and the Alps blanketing them in their slumbers, while vast, majestic Mont Blanc bends over them snow-white, the only fit type of the great white throne before which they and we shall be assembled.

But I am to-night oppressed almost to suffocation with

the idea that there may be many here who are unprepared for that ideal. Certainly some of you are not ready now, and you are not taking any steps towards preparation. What, O young man! O man in mid-life! O aged man! if this night thy soul should be required of thee?

## IT IS A SERIOUS QUESTION

to ask. It is a serious question to answer. You are no safer on the land than you are on the wave. Oh! make one mighty struggle for heaven. Put out for the shore of eternal safety before your soul sink. There comes to you to-night, not so much my voice as the voices of the lads John and James, sounding over the mountains, sounding across the sea, declaring with startling emphasis: "In such a day and hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh."

Before they went away, two years ago, on the finger of one of the lads was placed a gold ring, with the inscription: "God bless you," and on the finger of the other lad was placed a gold ring, with the inscription: "Remember father and mother;" but God your Father would this night put upon your soul immortal the signet-ring of his everlasting affection. Will you wear it?

"While life prolongs its precious light,  
Mercy is found and peace is given,  
But soon, ah! soon approaching night  
Will blot out every hope of heaven."

## A GREAT DAY.

"This day shall be unto you for a memorial."—*Exodus* xii. 14.

**M**Y sermon shall be short because of the stupendous scenes that are to come after it. The allusion in the text is to the passover which commemorated the deliverance of the children of Israel on the night when the destroy-

ing angel sped through the land of Egypt, destroying the enemy but saving the Israelites, because on the door-posts of their dwellings there was sprinkled the blood of a lamb. To-day we come to celebrate

#### A GRANDER PASSOVER,

all peril going away from our soul at the sight of the sprinkled blood of the Lamb of God on the door-posts of our hearts, Christ, our Passover, sacrificed for us. "This day shall be unto you for a memorial."

The sacramental Sabbath, whether it comes in an American church, or in an English chapel, or a Scotch kirk, is more impressive than any other Sabbath. Its light is holier, calmer, sweeter; its voices more tender; its touch is softer; its memories are more chastened. The fruits of the Christian life suddenly ripen, like orchards on the hill fronting the south. The wine of the holy sacrament seems pressed from the grapes of celestial vineyards, and the bread broken seems to drop from the hand of Him who parted the loaves for the five thousand. We walk to the Church of God with more thoughtful face and with quieter step. The jubilant songs of other Sundays are struck through with pensiveness and are all a-tremble with tears; and when, at the close of the service, at the door, we shake hands, it is with a more cordial grasp, because we feel thrilling through our body, and mind, and soul, the great doctrines of Christian brotherhood; and our minds go back to our forefathers celebrating the sacrament in times of persecution, in Scotland, among the highlands; commemorating the dying love of Christ while they were pursued of their enemies, pouring the wine into rough wooden cups, dipping the waters of baptism from the mountain rock, until one day they heard the voices of their enemies coming up the hill, and the pastor cried out: "O Lord, the Shepherd, have mercy on the sheep!" and instantly there

was a roaring heard, as of great floods, and sure enough a cloud had burst and there were great torrents running down the mountain side, that whelmed their foes with sudden wrath. What a deliverance it was for them on that sacramental day. O, that on this sacramental day the cloud of God's mercy might burst, and our sins be whelmed and our souls be saved. This is the amethyst of days. This is the pearl of days. This is the diamond of days. This is the day of days. Among the ten thousand million ages of eternity, the first day of March, 1874, will be to you significant and memorable, for "this day shall be unto you," for ever and for ever, "a memorial."

There is something in such a scene to make one's heart very tender, because it rehearses a death-scene. Now, you know, there is something very touching in such an incident. Though you are in a hotel and it is a stranger that is dying, how softly you move about the place; and if you come up to his couch, it is with uncovered head. Even the voice of the jester is stopped, and when the eyes of that stranger are closed, it is with emotion. But I am to tell you, this morning, of a death such as never before or since occurred. When we die we die for ourselves, and the crisis is alleviated by all beneficent ministries. Bathings for the hands; bathings for the head; bathings for the feet; the light turned down low, or set in just the right place; all the offices of affection about us when we come to die. But not so with Jesus. He died, not for Himself, but He died in torment, and

#### HE DIED FOR OTHERS.

He might have moved around in gardens made by His own hand, an earthly potentate among vineyards and olive groves sloping to the sea. Instead of being tossed in the fishing boat on Tiberius, He might have chosen a sunshiny day and a pleasant wave for the lake crossing. Instead of being

followed by an unwashed rabble, He might have charmed sanhedrims and universities with His eloquence. Instead of a cross and a bunch of twisted brambles on His brow, He might have died in the castle of a Roman merchant, the air bland with lilies and frankincense. But no, He died in torture; the good for the bad; the kind for the cruel; the wise for the ignorant; the Divine for the human. Oh, how tenderly we feel towards any one who has done us a great kindness, and, perhaps, at the imperilling of His own life. How we ought to feel towards Christ, the Captain of salvation on the white horse, riding down our foes; but in the moment He made the victorious charge, the lances of death struck Him.

“Was it for crimes that I had done,  
He groaned upon the tree?  
Amazing pity, grace unknown,  
And love beyond degree.”

I remark again: this is a tender scene, because it is a Christian reunion. Why was it that in the sessional meeting the other night, when I asked a woman if it were her son who sat next to her, making profession of his faith, she made no answer; but after a moment, trying to control her emotion, she burst into tears. I said within myself, she need not tell me the story. It is the old story of a prodigal got back. “The dead is alive again, and the lost is found.” Oh, how many families there are that rejoice together to-day!

These Christians, during the rest of the year, perhaps will not know much about each other. You go in one circle in society, these go in some other circle of society, and this one travels in that path, and this one the other path; but to-day we all come on one platform, and we make one confession, and we cling to one cross, and we gaze upon one death anguish. It seems to me, this morning, not like a church, but like a great family circle, and we join hands around the

cross of Christ, and we say: "One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one cross, one Christ, one doxology, one heaven!" While I stand here, it seems to me as if this communion table, which is only seven or eight feet long, and three or four feet wide, widens until all the Christians of our own denomination can sit at it; and

#### STILL THE TABLE WIDENS

until all the Christians in this land, of all names and denominations, come and sit at it; and still the table widens until it bridges the sea, and Christians on the other side of the Atlantic come and sit at it; and still that table widens until the redeemed of heaven mingle in the communion; Church militant; Church triumphant.

"One army of the living God,  
To His command we bow;  
Part of the host have crossed the flood  
And part are crossing now."

Again, my friends, this is an absorbing scene, because it arouses so many precious memories. We look back and remember the days of our childhood, when, long before we knew the meaning of the bread and the wine, we sat in the side pews on sacramental days, or in the galleries, and looked as our fathers, mothers, and older brothers and sisters sat at the communion. Or, if we sat with them, we pulled at mother's dress and said: "What does that mean? What is that in the cup? What is that on the plate?" Oh, yes, we remember those sacramental days of our boyhood. We remember how much more tender father was on that day than on any other day. We remember how mother stood, and without saying one word, looked at us, and her eyes got full of tears. Oh, the dear old souls! They have gone! But until the day of our death, we will associate this holy ordi-

nance with their memory. And when our work on earth is done, we will just go up and sit down beside them in the heavenly church, as we used to sit beside them in the earthly church, and then we will drink new wine in our Father's kingdom.

- "Behold the saints, beloved of God,  
Washed are their robes in Jesus' blood,  
Brighter than angels, lo, they shine;  
Their glories splendid and sublime."

I remark again: this scene is tender to-day because it is a confessional. You and I remember the time when if a man had charged us with anything like imperfection or wrong doing, we would have thrown ourselves back on our honour and said: "You don't know who you are talking to. I shall resent such an insult to my honour and integrity." We do not feel that way to-day. As we gaze upon the sacrifice of Christ, and think of what we have been and what we have done, our hearts melt within us. We see one dying accursed for our sin, and we hear Him in His dying words begging for our service, and yet how little service we have rendered. Of this short life we have begrudged God even a fragment. Alas! Alas! Some of us have lived out the most of our days, and yet we have rendered to God no earnest service. Sad, that we could have so maltreated Him on whom all our hopes depend. Oh, my brethren and sisters in Christ, to-day join hands with me in a confession before Christ. If there be any place more humble than another, let us take it. If there be any prayer more importunate than another, let us breathe it. If there be any confession more bitter than another, let us now weep it out.

"Well might the sun in darkness hide,  
And shut his glories in,  
When Christ, the mighty Maker, died  
For man, the creature's sin."

Once more: this is a tender and absorbing scene, because it is anticipative. My brethren, we are not always going to stay here. This is not our home. This is only the vestibule of the Church in which, at last, we expect to enter. After a while our names will be taken off the Church books, or there will be a mark in the margin to indicate that we have gone up to a better Church and to a higher communion. Our Father is not going to let His children remain in the dust.

#### THE GRAVE IS NO PLACE FOR US

to lie in. "The trumpet shall sound and the dead shall rise. The Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout, and the voice of the archangel," and we shall rise. The white robe in which they put us to our last slumber here must get whiter. Oh, the re-union of patriarchs, and apostles, and prophets, and of all our glorified kindred, and of that "great multitude that no man can number." Our sorrows over. Our journey ended. It will be as when kings banquet. And just as this morning, on my way to church, I saw the snow melting, and I thought that this snow will keep on melting until, after awhile, the fields will brighten in the glorious springtime, so I thought it will be with all these cold sorrows of earth; they shall be melted away at last before the warm sunshine of heaven. "And the lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall lead them to living fountains of water, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

But here I must pause. We shall have this morning a scene which for solemnity and interest I think has not been surpassed in any one church since the Day of Pentecost. Three hundred and twenty-eight souls to-day unite with us for the first time. "And when the Day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all assembled in one place, and there was the sound as of a rushing, mighty wind, and there sat on them as it were tongues of fire."



## LIFE AT HOME.

"Let them learn first to show pity at home."—1 *Tim.* v. 4.

A CHURCH within a church, a republic within a republic, a world within a world, is spelled by four letters—Home! If things go right there, they go right everywhere; if things go wrong there, they go wrong everywhere. The door-sill of the dwelling-house is the foundation of church and state. A man never gets higher than his own garret or lower than his own cellar. In other words, domestic life overarches and underguides all other life. The highest house of congress is the domestic circle; the rocking-chair in the nursery is higher than a throne. George Washington commanded the forces of the United States, but Mary Washington commanded George. Chrysostom's mother made his pen for him. If a man should start out and run seventy years in a straight line, he could not get out from under the shadow of his own mantelpiece. I therefore talk to you this morning about a matter of infinite and eternal moment when I speak of your home.

As individuals, we are fragments. God makes the races in parts, and then He gradually puts us together. What I lack, you make up; what you lack, I make up; our deficits and surpluses of character being the wheels in the great social mechanism. One person has the patience, another has the courage, another has the placidity, another has the enthusiasm; that which is lacking in one is made up by another, or made up by all. Buffaloes in herds; grouse in broods; quails in flocks; the human race in circles. God has most beautifully arranged this. It is in this way that He balances society; this conservative and that radical keeping things even. Every ship must have its mast, cutwater, taffrail, ballast. Thank God, then, for Princetown and Andover for the opposites. I have no more right to blame

a man for being different from me than a driving-wheel has a right to blame the iron shaft that holds it to the centre. John Wesley balances Calvin's Institutes. Dr. M'Cosh gives to Scotland the strong bones of theology : Dr. Guthrie clothes them with a throbbing heart and warm flesh. The difficulty is that we are not satisfied with just the work that God has given us to do. The water-wheel wants to come inside the mill and grind the grist, and the hopper wants to go out and dabble in the water. Our usefulness, and the welfare of society, depend upon our

#### STAYING IN JUST THE PLACE

that God has put us, or intended we should occupy. For more compactness, and that we may be more useful, we are gathered in still smaller circles in the home group. And there you have the same varieties again ; brothers, sisters, husband, and wife ; all different in temperaments and tastes. It is fortunate that it should be so. If the husband be all impulse, the wife must be all prudence. If one sister be sanguine in her temperament, the other must be lymphatic. Mary and Martha are necessities. There will be no dinner for Christ if there be no Martha ; there will be no audience for Jesus if there be no Mary. The home organization is most beautifully constructed. Eden has gone : the bowers are all broken down ; the animals that Adam stroked with his hand that morning when they came up to get their names have since shot forth tusk and sting, and growled panther at panther ; and mid-air iron beaks plunge, till with clothed wing and eyeless sockets the twain come whirling down from under the sun in blood and fire. Eden has gone, but there is just one little fragment left. It floated down on the river Hiddekel out of Paradise. It is the marriage institution. It does not, as at the beginning, take away from him a rib. Now it is an addition of ribs.

## THIS INSTITUTION OF MARRIAGE

has been defamed in our day. Socialism, and polygamy, and mormonism, and the most damnable of all things, free-lovism, have been trying to turn this earth into a Turkish harem or a great Salt Lake City. While the pulpits have been comparatively silent, novels—their cheapness only equalled by their nastiness—are trying to educate, have taken upon themselves to educate, this nation, in regard to holy marriage which makes or breaks for time and eternity. Oh, this is not a mere question of residence or wardrobe. It is a question charged with gigantic joy or sorrow; with heaven or hell. Alas, for this new dispensation of George Sand. Alas, for this mingling of the night-shade with the marriage garlands. Alas, for the venom of adders spit into the tankards. Alas, for the white frosts of eternal death that kill the orange blossoms. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is to assert what is right and to attack what is wrong. Attempt has been made to take this institution, which was intended for the happiness and elevation of the race, and make it a mere commercial enterprise; an exchange of houses, and land, and equipage; a business partnership of two; stuffed up with the stories of romance and knight-errantry, and unfaithfulness and feminine angelhood. The two after awhile have roused up to find that, instead of the Paradise they dreamed of, they have got nothing but a Van Amburgh's menagerie, filled with tigers and wild cats. Eighty thousand divorces in Paris in one year preceded the worst revolution that France ever saw. It was only the first course in that banquet of hell: and I tell you what you know as well as I do, that wrong notions on the subject of Christian marriage are the cause at this day of more moral outrage before God and man than any other cause.

There are some things that I want to bring before you. I know there are those of you who have had homes set up for

a great many years, and notwithstanding the hardships and trials that come to them, you would not surrender them ; and then there are those here who have just established their home. They have only been in it a few months or a few years.

Then there are those who will, after awhile, set up for themselves a home, and it is right that I should speak out upon these themes.

My first counsel to you is

HAVE JESUS IN YOUR NEW HOME,

if it is a new home ; and let Him who was a guest at Bethany be in your household ; let the Divine blessing drop upon your every hope, and plan, and expectation. Those young people who begin with God end with heaven. Have on your right hand the engagement ring of the Divine affections. If one of you be a Christian, let that one take the Bible and read a few verses in the evening time, and then kneel down and commend yourself to Him who setteth the solitary in families.

I want to tell you that the destroying angel passes by without touching or entering the door-post sprinkled with blood of the everlasting Covenant. Why is it that in some families they never get along, and in others they always get along well ? I have watched such cases and have come to a conclusion. In the first instance, nothing seemed to go pleasantly, and after awhile there came devastation, domestic disaster, or estrangement. Why ? They started wrong. In the other case, although there were hardships, and trials, and some things that had to be explained, still things went on pleasantly until the very last. Why ? They started right.

My second advice to you in your home is, to exercise to the very last possibility of your nature *the law of forbearance*.

Prayers in the household will not make up for everything. Some of the best people in the world are the hardest to get along with. There are people who stand up in prayer-meetings and pray like an angel, who at home are uncompromising and cranky. You may not have everything just as you want it. Sometimes it will be the duty of the husband and sometimes of the wife to yield; but both stand punctiliously on your rights, and you will have a Waterloo with no Blucher coming up at nightfall to decide the conflict.

NEVER BE ASHAMED TO APOLOGISE

when you have done wrong in domestic affairs. Let that be a law of your household. The best thing I ever heard of my grandfather, whom I never saw, was this: that once, having unrighteously rebuked one of his children, he himself—having lost his patience, and, perhaps, having been misinformed of the child's doings—found out his mistake, and in the evening of the same day gathered all his family together, and said: "Now, I have one explanation to make, and one thing to say. Thomas, this morning I rebuked you very unfairly. I am very sorry for it. I rebuked you in the presence of the whole family, and now I ask your forgiveness in their presence." It must have taken some courage to do that. It was right, was it not? Never be ashamed to apologize for domestic inaccuracy. Find out the points; what are the weak points, if I may call them so, of your companion, and then stand aloof from them. Do not carry the fire of your temper too near the gunpowder. If the wife be easily fretted by disorder in the household, let the husband be careful where he throws his slippers. If the husband comes home from the store with his patience all exhausted, do not let the wife unnecessarily cross his temper. But both stand up for your rights, and I will promise the everlasting sound of the war whoop; your life will be spent

in making up, and marriage will be to you an unmitigated curse. Cowper said :

“The kindest and the happiest pair  
Will find occasion to forbear ;  
And something, every day they live,  
To pity and perhaps forgive.”

I advise, also, that you make your chief pleasure circle around about that home. It is unfortunate when it is otherwise. If the husband spend the most of his nights away from home, of choice and not of necessity, he is not the head of the household ; he is only the cashier. If the wife throw the cares of the household into the servant's lap, and then spend five nights of the week at the opera or theatre, she may clothe her children with satins, and laces, and ribbons that would confound a French milliner, but they are orphans. Oh, it is sad when a child has no one to say its prayers to, because mother has gone off to the evening entertainment. In India they bring children and throw them to the crocodiles, and it seems very cruel ; but the jaws of New York and Brooklyn dissipation are swallowing down more little children to-day than all the monsters that ever crawled upon the banks of the Ganges. I have seen the sorrow of a Godless mother on the death of a child she neglected. It was not so much grief that she felt from the fact that the child was dead, as the fact that she had neglected it. She said : “If I had only watched over and cared for the child, I know God would not have taken it.” The tears came not ; it was a dry, blistering tempest—a scorching simoon of the desert. When she wrung her hands, it seemed as if she would twist her fingers from their sockets ; when she seized her hair, it seemed as if she had, in wild terror, grasped a coiling serpent with her right hand. No tears ! Comrades of the little one came in and wept over the coffin ; neighbours came in, and the moment they

saw the still face of the child the shower broke. No tears for her. God gives tears as the summer rain to the parched soul; but in all the universe, the driest, the hottest, the most scorching and consuming thing is a mother's heart if she has neglected her child, when once it is dead. God may forgive her, but

SHE WILL NEVER FORGIVE HERSELF.

The memory will sink the eyes deeper into the sockets, and pinch the face, and whiten the hair, and eat up the heart with vultures that will not be satisfied, for ever plunging deeper their iron beaks. Oh, you wanderers from your home, go back to your duty! The brightest flowers in all the earth are those which grow in the garden of a Christian household, clambering over the porch of a Christian home.

I advise you also to *cultivate sympathy of occupation*. Sir James M'Intosh, one of the most eminent and elegant men that ever lived, while standing at the very height of his eminence, said to a great company of scholars: "My wife made me." The wife ought to be the advising partner in every firm. She ought to be interested in all the losses and gains of shop and store. She ought to have a right—she *has* a right—to know everything. If a man goes into a business transaction that he dare not tell his wife of, you may depend that he is on the way either to bankruptcy or moral ruin. There may be some things which he does not wish to trouble his wife with, but if he *dare* not tell her, he is on the road to discomfiture. On the other hand, the husband ought to be sympathetic with the wife's occupation. It is no easy thing to keep house. Many a woman that could have endured martyrdom as well as Margaret, the Scotch girl, have actually been worn out by house management. There are a thousand martyrs of the kitchen. It is very annoying, after the vexations of the day around the stove or the

table, or in the nursery or parlour, to have the husband say : " You know nothing about trouble ; you ought to be in the store half-an-hour." Sympathy of occupation ! If the husband's work cover him with the soot of the furnace, or the odours of leather or soap factories, let not the wife be easily disgusted at the begrimed hands or unsavoury aroma. Your gains are one, your interests are one, your losses are one ; lay hold of the work of life with both hands. Four hands to fight the battles. Four eyes to watch for the danger. Four shoulders on which to carry the trials. It is a very sad thing when the painter has a wife who does not like pictures. It is a very sad thing for a pianist when she has a husband who does not like music. It is a very sad thing when a wife is not suited unless her husband has what is called " a genteel business." As far as I understand " a genteel business," it is something to which a man goes at ten o'clock in the morning, and comes home at two or three o'clock in the afternoon, and gets a large amount of money for doing nothing. That is, I believe, a " genteel business ;" and there has been many a wife who has made the mistake of not being satisfied until the husband has given up the tanning of the hides, or the turning of the bannisters, or the building of the walls, and put himself in circles where he has nothing to do but smoke cigars and drink wine, and get himself into habits that upset him, going down in the maelstrom, taking his wife and children with him.

#### THERE ARE A GREAT MANY TRAINS

running from earth to destruction. They start all the hours of the day and all the hours of the night. There are the freight trains—they go very slowly and very heavily ; and there are the accommodation trains going on towards destruction, and they stop very often, and let a man get out when he wants to. But genteel idleness is an express train ;



Satan is the stoker, and death is the engineer; and though one may come out in front of it, and swing the red flag of "danger," or the lantern of God's Word, it makes just one shot into perdition, coming down the embankment with a shout, and a wail, and a shriek—crash, crash! There are two classes of people sure of destruction; first, those who have nothing to do; secondly, those who have something to do, but who are too lazy or too proud to do it.

I have one more word of advice to give to those who would have a happy home, and that is: *let love preside in it*. When your behaviour in the domestic circle becomes a mere matter of calculation—when the caress you give is merely the result of deliberate study of the position you occupy, happiness lies stark dead on the hearth-stone. When the husband's position as head of the household is maintained by loudness of voice, by strength of arm, by fire of temper, the republic of domestic bliss has become a despotism that neither God nor man will abide. Oh, ye who have promised to love each other at the altar, how dare you commit perjury? Let no shadow of suspicion come on your affection.

#### IT IS EASIER TO KILL THAT FLOWER

than it is to make it live again. The blast from hell that puts out that light leaves you in the blackness of darkness for ever.

Here is a man and wife; they agree in nothing else, but they agree they will have a home. They will have a splendid house, and they think that if they have a house they will have a home. Architects make the plan, and the mechanics execute it; the house is to cost one hundred thousand dollars. It is done. The carpets are spread; lights are hoisted; curtains are hung; cards of invitation sent out. The horses in gold-plated harness prance at the gate; guests come in and take their places; the flute sounds; the dancers go

up and down; and with one grand whirl, the wealth and the fashion, and the mirth of the great town wheel amid the pictured walls. Ha! this is happiness. Float it on the smoking viands; sound it in the music; whirl it in the dance; cast it on the snow of sculpture; sound it up the brilliant stairway; flash it in chandeliers. Happiness, indeed!

Let us build on the centre of the parlour-floor a throne to happiness; let all the guests, when come in, bring their flowers and pearls, and diamonds, and throw them on this pyramid, and let it be a throne; and then let Happiness, the queen, mount the throne, and we will stand around, and all chalices lifted, we will say: "Drink, oh queen; live for ever!" But the guests depart, the flutes are breathless, the last clash of the impatient hoofs is heard in the distance, and the twain of the household come back to see the queen of Happiness on the throne amid the parlour floor. But, alas! as they come back, the flowers have faded, the sweet odours have become the smell of a charnel-house, and instead of the queen of Happiness there sits there the gaunt form of Anguish, with bitter lip, and sunken eye, and ashes in her hair. The romp of the dancers who have left seems crumbling yet, like jarring thunders that quake the floor and rattle the glasses of the feast rim to rim. The spilt wine on the floor turns into blood. The wreaths of plush have become wriggling reptiles. Terrors catch tangled in the canopy that overhangs the couch. A strong gust of wind comes through the hall, and the drawing-room, and the bed-chamber, in which all the lights go out. And from the lips of the wine-beakers come the words: "Happiness is not in us." And the arches respond: "It is not in us." And the silenced instruments of music, thrummed on by invisible fingers, answer: "Happiness is not in us!" And the frozen lips of Anguish break

open, and seated on the throne of wilted flowers, she strikes her bony hands together, and groans: "It is not in me!"

That very night a clerk with a salary of a thousand dollars a year—only one thousand—goes to his home, set up three months ago, just after the marriage-day.

#### LOVE MEETS HIM AT THE DOOR;

love sits with him at the table, love talks over the work of the day; love takes down the Bible, and reads of Him who came our souls to save; and they kneel, and while they are kneeling—right in that plain room, on that plain carpet—the angels of God build a throne, not out of flowers that perish and fade away, but out of garlands of heaven, wreath on top of wreath, amaranth on amaranth, until the throne is done. Then the harps of God sounded, and suddenly there appeared one who mounted the throne with eye so bright, and brow so fair, that the twain knew it was Christian Love. And they knelt at the foot of the throne, and putting one hand on each head, she blessed them, and said: "Happiness is with me!" And that throne of celestial bloom withered not with the passing years; and the queen left not the throne till one day the married pair felt stricken in years—felt themselves called away, and knew not which way to go, and the queen bounded from the throne, and said: "Follow me; and I will show you the way up to the realm of everlasting love." And so they went up to sing songs of love and walk on pavements of love, and to live together in mansions of love, and to rejoice for ever in the truth, that God is love.

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## WHAT IS YOUR LIFE?

"What is your life?"—*James iv. 14.*

"While several hundred persons were gathered in the parlours of the Central Baptist Church, Syracuse, on the evening of the 23rd of June, the floor suddenly gave way, precipitating people and furniture into the room below, and pulling the ceiling and timbers down upon them. Fourteen persons were killed outright, or have since died, and nearly one hundred more were injured, about twenty of them severely. The floor having given way in the centre, the hapless victims were crowded into a V-shaped vortex, amid broken timbers, plastering, and furniture, and many who were unhurt were in imminent danger of suffocation. The pastor, Rev. George T. Dowling, and his wife, went down with the rest, but both escaped with scarcely any injuries. The occasion of the gathering was a festival by the ladies of the church, and a 'Little Old Folks' Concert' by the children."

**S**UCH is the brief newspaper epitome of a terrible calamity which has lately befallen a Christian community in the State of New York.

This day seems oppressive to me with solemnities. About to come up through the "Narrows" of New York harbour is a vessel bringing all that remains on earth of the pleasure party that went out on the 14th of last May, on the Lake Geneva, Switzerland. Of the three young men who perished there, only one body has been reclaimed, and parental arms from our city are stretched out to receive it. Welcome back to thy native shores, O loved one, though thou comest asleep! Welcome, though it be amid a rain of tears and the snapping of heart-strings! Remorseless lake, give back thy dead! We would have them pillowed in our cemeteries.

While meditating upon these things, there comes a more startling and overpowering cry from the central city of our own State. Many whom we knew were in that catastrophe.

And now the call from New York harbour, louder than the dash of the wave, and the call from Syracuse, louder than the crackling of the timbers, unite with the call of my text in demanding "What is your life?"

The anatomist, with knife and skilful analysis, has sought to find out the secret hiding-place of the principle of life; but there is a barred gate-way that he cannot enter. No satisfactory definition has ever been given of what life is. In complete swoon, when all muscular action of the heart has stopped, and the brain lies dormant, life may still exist, and, rallying its scattered forces, march on to threescore and ten. But I have a lamp in the light of which I can give an intelligent answer to this question; and so, leaving the anatomist to his curious, fascinating, and sublime investigation, I come in the light of the Word of God to answer the question: "What is your life?"

There may be now and then in our existence a staccato passage; but, for the most part, our days and years pass in a sort of monotone. We rise in the morning, we breakfast, we go to our daily occupation, we dine, we shake hands, we taste our evening meal, we sleep; and Tuesday is a copy of Monday, and Wednesday is an echo of Tuesday. If you are forty years of age, then you have passed fourteen thousand six hundred days, and yet, without the use of memorandum, you cannot give me an account of fifty of them. Our days pass on with even pace, so that we seldom estimate what we are, what we have been, and what we will be. Oh that this morning this solemn and overwhelming providence in a sister city might come to our ears, and give startling emphasis to this interlocutory of the Apostle: "What is your life?"

In answering this question of my text, I reply, in the first place,

OUR LIFE IS A TEST.

If you buy goods, you very soon want to find out whether

they are really worth what you paid for them. Every new ship must make a trial trip. If you bring a man into some important position, and there is a crisis where his behaviour will either make or break you, you say: "Now I will have a chance to find out what he is." Well, every man is on his trial trip. Men, angels, and devils are finding out what is in you, what you are worth, and what your weaknesses are. No man liveth to himself. Every word you speak, every action you perform, has a thousand echoes. Earth, and heaven, and hell are gazing upon your behaviour, and you are passing the trial. You are watching me, to see whether I am faithful or unfaithful; I am watching you, to see whether you are faithful or unfaithful; and each one of us is going now through the solemn, unmistakable, tremendous test.

I reply still further to the question of my text, that *our life is an apprenticeship*. A man works at a trade four or five years, or he studies for a profession six or ten years, and then he enters what he considers his chief mission. But, my brethren, our entire life on earth is an apprenticeship. Not until death do we begin our chief employment. This world is not our principal workshop. All the inhabitants of heaven are busy for ever. The Bible says they rest not day nor night. If to carry on the little business of this world, it requires so many hands, and feet, and minds, who can estimate how many activities will be required to carry on the enterprises of heaven? When our little world is finished and burned up, is the whole universe to stop business? Because one thread and needle store in a back alley fails, is all the commerce of a metropolis arrested? Oh no. In heaven there will be no sleeping, no idling. That Christian woman who feeds the sick pauper in the back street, will be a queen over an infinite realm of light, and joy, and glory. And that Christian man who can hardly make his way to church on crutches, will be a ministering spirit, flying to one of the

farthest outposts of God's dominion. We do not work in this world; we are only getting ready to work. We are apprentices, and have not served our time out. We are students, and have not got our diplomas. Death is to be graduation. It will be commencement-day.

I go on and answer the question of my text, by saying that

OUR LIFE IS A CONFLICT.

If you have never tried to control your passions, if you have never tried to subdue your temper, if you have never tried to rouse yourselves up to a better manhood or womanhood, you cannot know what I mean. But if you have attempted to live a holy life, and to be better and to do better, then you sympathize with the apostle Paul when he represented our life on earth a war with the world, a war with the flesh, a war with the devil. In addition to the struggle you have within, you have had a thousand outside battles. Sometimes it has been against poverty, against physical distresses, against bad social position, against an unhappy family name. In one case it has been one thing, and in another case it has been another thing; and with many of you, up to this point, it has been a hand-to-hand fight; and so it will be even unto the end. There is no tent for peaceful encampment but the grave. Life a conflict: so the Bible announces it. Life a conflict: so your own experience affirms it.

"Must I be carried to the skies,  
On flowery beds of ease,  
While others fought to win the prize  
And sailed through bloody seas?"

Again I answer the question of the text, by saying that *our life on earth is a prophecy*. By that I mean, that what we are in this world we will be in the world to come, only on a larger scale. If a hero here, a hero there. If a cheat here, a cheat there. If a Christian here, a Christian there. I know sometimes there are marvellous changes in the last hour of life,

and the dying thief repenting goes into Paradise; but that is the exception. The probability is, my brethren, that what you are in the present time you will be in the future—what you now are you will always be, only with wider range. The prophecy is, if you now love that which is unclean and unrighteous, you will always love it. If your highest joy is in God, and your chief ambition to be like Him, you are on your way to grandeurs that no dream ever was bright enough to depict. I judge from the blossoms what the fruit is going to be when it sets. He that is filthy shall be filthy still, and he that is holy shall be holy still. On banks of celestial joy walks the consecrated Alfred Cookman. In dungeons of starless night sits John Wilkes Booth.

I reply further to the question of my text, "What is your life?" by saying that

#### OUR LIFE IS A PREPARATION.

If we are going on a long journey, we want some time to get ready. We must have extra apparel. We want our guide-book. Our comfort on the journey will depend very much upon what we start with. If we are going among blood-thirsty savages, we must take knife and pistol. God has started us out on a journey that will have no terminus, and once started we never come back. Are we getting ready? Are we armed? That question you hear to-day; but if I should utter it an hour from now, perhaps you might not hear it. Life is a preparation. If you have any weapons to sharpen, you had better sharpen them now. If you have any lamps to light, you had better light them now. When death once shuts the door of the sepulchre, the angel of repentance never opens it. "As the tree falleth, so it must lie." As far as I can tell your case, your great need is to get rid of your sins. I know of only one way to do it. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin; and though you



may this morning count yourself the worst sinner, you may, by the grace of God, become the best saint. "Where sin abounded, grace shall much more abound."

Again I answer this question of my text by saying *our life is a great uncertainty*. Nobody steps out of life as he expects to. Though a man may have been sick for thirty years, he is surprised at last when he goes. And though you may have known some one in invalidism for a quarter of a century, when you hear he has departed, you throw up your hands and say: "Is it possible?" We can make no calculation about the future. The world is full of temptation and of peril. We do not know how our children will turn out. We do not know what we ourselves might be tempted to do. We resolve on one thing, we do another. Our associations change. Our plans change. We change. And life is such a complete uncertainty, that I would not want to live one hour without the grace of God, and I very certainly would not want to die without it. Blessed be God, I feel under my feet, this morning, a rock firmer than the everlasting hills. That keeps me hopeful and confident. No overbearing autocrat sits on the throne of the universe. My Father is king; and the mountains may depart, and the hills be removed, but His goodness, and His kindness, and His grace, never, never. In this Christian hope I have indulged for about twenty-two years; and while I should be sorry to know that there is any one in this house more unworthy than I have been, still I can tell you that I know enough of this religion to recommend it everywhere, and always, and to say that the kindest, gentlest,

#### THE GRANDEST FRIEND A MAN EVER HAD

is Jesus. I know Him. I believe in Him. I have put all my hope on Him. He has never betrayed me. He will never betray you; and the best thing that you can do now

is this moment to surrender yourselves to Him for time and for eternity. But do not take my experience. It is comparatively brief. There are some, as you look over the audience, who have frost on the brow—ask them what they think of Jesus? Ask them whether He ever betrayed them. In what dark hour? By what grave? In what sickness? Ah, these old people can tell you a better story than I can of how in sickness Christ was their best physician; and how—when they came to give the last kiss to the cold lips that never might speak again, and to stand on the verge of a grave deep enough to bury all—they found Jesus the Comforter; and that this morning their brightest anticipation of the future is the presence of Him whom, having not seen, we love; in whom, though now we see Him not, yet believing, we rejoice with a joy unspeakable and full of glory.

I thought it best to say some of these things as I stand on the verge of my summer vacation, for I will be absent from you until September. I thought I would give my testimony for Jesus, and then urge you to look after this matter immediately, while I put to you the question of the text: "What is your life?"

There never was a better illustration of its uncertainty than we find in the disaster of our sister city. Some of you think of Syracuse only as a dépôt through which you pass on the way West. Some of you, who know it better, know it to be one of the most industrious and busy cities on the continent. It is the Golden Gate between the East and the West. Through its heart rolls the tide of a nation's life, beating hard with the motion of the great lakes on the one side and the ocean on the other. Its convention halls filled with popular assemblages that have come there to decide great questions of philanthropy or politics. On either bank of this rushing stream of life are mansions, counting-rooms, stores, shops—hives where the voices of busy men hum

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while they gather in the honey of wealth. Feet shuffling, anvils ringing, bridges rumbling, printing-presses rattling. Illumined Lyceum, and literary club, and churches lighted for week-night services, and houses swarming with fashionable levee. But it does not appear to me especially in that light. When I think of Syracuse, I think of it as the place of beautiful homes, and warm sympathies, and ardent friendships, and blessed associations. Among the happiest years of my ministry were those spent in that city, and the sorrow comes from there to my heart to-day. The young pastor of that church, the son of the leading minister of his denomination in this country, had only a few months ago gone to his new field; and last Tuesday night, surrounded by his congregation, in a merry festival, everything going pleasantly and profitably on, with a sudden crash that I have not the heart to depict, many were ushered into the eternal world, and more were taken out half dead. Awful wreck of youth and old age; bride and bridegroom; the distinguished and the unknown. That city to-day is frantic with grief, and already

#### THE LONG PROCESSIONS HAVE GONE OUT

to Oaklands, that beautiful cemetery where I have helped to put down some of my very best friends. It is a good place to sleep in. Oh! men and women who know how to pray, pray for those broken hearts. Oh! men and women who have had troubles of your own, cry unto God for that groaning city—for companions bereft, for parents suddenly made childless, for homes where father and mother will never come, for the pastor of that church, that he may come forth from this anguish of soul newly set apart and ordained by the "laying on of hands" of this calamity. Issuing from such a scene, he will be mightily in earnest now, and his cry will ring through the city: "What is your life?" But while we pray for them, let us also pray for ourselves. Be

ye also ready. Risk not one moment away from Christ. For all the unregenerate and unpardoned there is not one hour of safety between this and the judgment-day, and after that there will be a tumbling in of eternal calamities. Your first, your second, your hundredth, your thousandth, your last want is a heart changed by the almighty grace of God. Oh! get it now. Bow your head on the back of the seat in front of you, and be quick in surrendering yourselves to Jesus. He is mighty to save, and He would just as lief do it now as any time. I do not think that cowardice is a characteristic of my nature, and yet I tell you plainly that I would not dare to walk down the street, or cross the ferry, were it not for a hope in Christ that whatever happens to my body my immortal soul shall go free. Why, the air is so full of perils, flying this way, flying that, flying before your face, flying behind your back, flying within, flying without, that we need God's promises hovering over us like a canopy, and marshalled all around us like an armed host.

Standing as we do at the beginning of a season when there is more sickness than at other times in the same year, and when many of us will be exposed to additional perils by travel, I thought it this morning better for me to cry out with an emphasis deepened by the calamity at the West, asking you "What is your life?" Is it a test? Make a successful experiment. Is it an apprenticeship? Make it an industrious one. Is it a conflict? Fight a brave fight. Is it a prophecy? Let it foretell glorious results. Is it a preparation? Make sure work. Is it an uncertainty? Get a Divine insurance. You say: "I will do this, I will do that. I will go into this city, and I will get gain." Whereas you know not what shall be on the morrow; for "What is your life?" "It is even as a vapour that appeareth for a little season, and then vanisheth away."

## THE OUTSIDE SHEEP.

"Other sheep I have which are not of this fold."—*John x. 16.*

**T**HERE is no monopoly in religion. The grace of God is not a little property that we may fence off and have all to ourselves. It is not a king's park at which we look through a barred gate-way, wishing that we might go in and see the deer and the statuary, and pluck the flowers and fruits in the royal conservatory. No, it is the Father's orchard, and everywhere there are bars that we may let down and gates that we may swing open.

In my boyhood, next to the country school-house, there was an orchard of apples, owned by a very lame man, who, although there were apples in the place perpetually decaying, and by scores and scores of bushels, never would allow any of us to touch the fruit. One day, in the sinfulness of a nature inherited from our first parents, who were ruined by the same temptation, some of us invaded that orchard; but soon retreated, for the man came after us at a speed reckless of making his lameness worse, and cried out: "Boys, drop those apples, or I'll set the dog on you!"

Well, my friends, there are Christian men who have the Church under severe guard. There is fruit in this orchard for the whole world; but they have a rough and unsympathetic way of accosting outsiders, as though they had no business here, though the Lord wants them all to come and take the largest and the ripest fruit on the premises. Have you an idea that because you were baptized at thirteen months of age, and because you have all your life been under hallowed influences, that therefore you have a right to one whole side of the Lord's table, spreading yourself out and taking up the entire room. I tell you no. You will have to haul in your elbows, for I shall to-night place on either side of you those whom you never expected would sit there; for,

as Christ said to the Jews long ago, so He says to you and to me to-night: "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold."

MacDonald, the Scotchman, has four or five dozen head of sheep. Some of them are browsing on the heather, some of them are lying down under the trees, some of them are in his yard; they are scattered around in eight or ten different places. Cameron, his neighbour, comes over and says: "I see you have thirty sheep; I have just counted them." "No," says MacDonald, "I have a great many more sheep than that. Some are here, and some are elsewhere. They are scattered all around about. I have four or five thousand in my flocks. 'Other sheep I have which are not in *this* fold.'"

So Christ says to us. Here is a knot of Christians and there is a knot of Christians, but they make up

#### A SMALL PART OF THE FLOCK.

Here is the Episcopal fold, the Methodist fold, the Lutheran fold, the Congregational fold, the Presbyterian fold, the Baptist and the Pedo-Baptist fold, the only difference between these last two being the mode of sheep-washing; and so they are scattered all over; and we come with our statistics, and say there are so many thousand of the Lord's sheep; but Christ responds: "No, no; you have not seen more than one out of a thousand of my flock. They are scattered all over the earth. 'Other sheep I have which are not of this fold.'"

Christ, in my text, was prophesying the conversion of the Gentiles with as much confidence as though they were already converted, and He is, to-night, in the words of my text, prophesying the coming of a great multitude of outsiders that you never supposed would come in, saying to you and saying to me: "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold."

In the first place, I remark, that the heavenly Shepherd will find many of his sheep *amid the non-church goers*. There are congregations where they are all Christians, and they seem to be completely finished, and they remind one of the skeleton-leaves which, by chemical preparation, have had all the greenness and verdure taken off of them, and are left cold, and white, and delicate, nothing wanting but a glass case to put over them. The minister of Christ has nothing to do with such Christians but to come once a week, and with ostrich feather dust off the accumulation of the last six days, leaving them bright and crystalline as before. But the other kind of a Church is an armoury, with perpetual sound of drum and fife, gathering recruits for the Lord of hosts. We say to every applicant: "Do you want to be on God's side, the safe side and the happy side? If so, come in the armoury and get equipped. Here is a bath in which to be cleansed. Here are sandals to put upon your feet. Here is a helmet for your brow. Here is a breast-plate for your heart. Here is a sword for your right arm, and yonder is the battle-field. Quit yourselves like men!"

There are some here, to-night, who say: "I stopped going to church ten or twenty years ago." My brother, is it not strange that you should be the first man I should talk to to-night? I know all your case; I know it very well. You have not been accustomed to come into the house of God, but I have a surprising announcement to make to you: you are going to become one of the Lord's sheep. "Ah," you say, "it is impossible. You don't know how far I am from anything of that kind." I know all about it. I have wandered up and down the world, and I understand your case. I have a still more startling announcement to make in regard to you: you are not only going to become one of the Lord's sheep, but you will become one to-night. You will stay after this service to be talked with about your soul. People of

God, pray for that man! That is the only use for you to-night. I shall not break off so much as a crumb for you, Christians, in this sermon, for I am going to give it all to the outsiders. "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold."

Last year, when the *Atlantic* went to pieces on Mars' Rock, and the people clambered up on the beach, why did not that heroic minister of the Gospel, of whom we have all read, sit down and take care of those men on the beach, wrapping them in flannels, kindling fire for them, seeing that they got plenty of food? Ah, he knew that there were others who would do that. He says: "Yonder are men and women freezing in the rigging of that wreck. Boys, launch the boat!" And now I see the oar-blades bend under the strong pull; but before they reached the rigging a woman was frozen and dead. She was washed off, poor thing! But he says: "There is a man to save;" and he cries out: "Hold on five minutes longer, and I will save you. Steady! Steady! Give me your hand. Leap into the life-boat. Thank God, he is saved!" So there are those here, to-night, who are safe on the shore of God's mercy. I will not spend any time with them at all; but I see there are some who are freezing in the rigging of sin, and surrounded by perilous storms. Pull away, my lads! Let us reach them! Alas! one is washed off and gone. There is one more to be saved. Let us push out for that one.

#### CLUTCH THE ROPE.

Oh! dying man, clutch it as with a death-grip. Steady, now, on the slippery places. Steady. There! Saved! Saved! Just as I thought. For Christ has declared that there are some still in the breakers who shall come ashore. "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold."

Christ commands His ministers to be fishermen; and when



I go fishing I do not want to go among other churches, but into the wide world; not sitting along Hohokus Creek, where eight or ten other persons are sitting with hook and line, but, like the fishermen of Newfoundland, sailing off and dropping net away outside, forty or fifty miles from shore. Yes, there are non-church-goers here who will come in. Next Sabbath morning and evening they will be here again, or in some better church. They are this moment being swept into Christian associations. Their voice will be heard in public prayer. They will die in peace, their bed surrounded by Christian sympathies, and be carried out by devout men to be buried, and on their grave be chiselled the words: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." And on Resurrection-Day you will get up with the dear children you have already buried and with your Christian parents who have already won the palm. And all that grand and glorious history begins to-night. "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold."

I remark, again, the Heavenly Shepherd is going to find a great many of His sheep among *those who are positive rejectors of Christianity*. I do not know how you came to reject Christianity. It may have been through hearing Theodore Parker preach, or through reading Renan's "Life of Jesus," or through the infidel talk of some young man in your store. It may have been through the trickery of some professed Christian man who disgusted you with religion. I do not ask you how you became so; but you frankly tell me to-night that you do reject it. You do not believe that Christ is a Divine being, although you admit that He was a very good man. You do not believe that the Bible was inspired of God, although you think that there are some very fine things in it. You believe that the Scriptural description of Eden was only an allegory. There are fifty things that I believe that you do not believe. And yet

you are an accommodating man. Everybody that knows you says that of you. If I should ask you to do a kindness for me, or if any one else should ask of you a kindness, you would do it. Now, I have a kindness to ask of you to-night. It is something that will cost you nothing and will give me great delight. I want you by experiment to try the power of Christ's religion. If I should come to you, and you were very sick, and doctors had given you up, and said there was no chance for you, and I should take out a bottle, and say: "Here is a medicine that will cure you; it has cured fifty people, and it will cure you." You would say: "I have no confidence in it." I would say: "Won't you take it to oblige me?" "Well," you would say: "if it's any accommodation to you, I'll take it." My friend, will you be just as accommodating in matters of religion? There are some of you who have found out that this world cannot satisfy your soul. You are like the man who told me last Sabbath night, after the service was over, "I have tried this world and found it an insufficient portion. Tell me of something better." You have come to that. You are sick for the need of Divine medicament. Now, I come and tell you of a Physician who will cure you, who has cured hundreds and hundreds who were sick as you are. "Oh," you say, "I have no confidence in Him." But will you not try him? Accommodate me in this matter; oblige me in this matter; just try Him. I am very certain He will cure you. You reply: "I have no especial confidence in Him; but if you ask me as a matter of accommodation, introduce Him." So I do introduce Him—Christ, the Physician, who has cured more blind eyes, and healed more ghastly wounds, and bound up more broken hearts than all the doctors since the time of Æsculapius. That Divine Physician is here. Are you not ready to try Him? Will you not, as a pure matter of experiment, try Him, and state your case before Him to-night?

## HOLD NOTHING BACK FROM HIM.

If you cannot pray, if you do not know how to pray any other way, say "O Lord Jesus Christ, this is a strange thing for me to do. I know nothing about the formulas of religion. These Christian people have been talking so long about what Thou canst do for me. I am ready to do whatever Thou commandest me to do. I am ready to take whatever Thou commandest me to take. If there be any power in religion, as these people say, let me have the advantage of it." Will you try that experiment to-night? I do not at this point of my discourse say that there is anything in religion; but I simply say, try it—try it. Do not take my counsel or the counsel of any clergyman, if you despise clergymen. Perhaps we may be talking professionally; perhaps we may be prejudiced in the matter; perhaps we may be hypocritical in our utterances; perhaps we may preach because we are paid to preach; perhaps our advice is not worth taking. Then take the counsel of some very respectable layman, as John Milton, the poet; as William Wilberforce, the statesman; as Isaac Newton, the astronomer; as Robert Boyle, the philosopher; as Locke, the metaphysician. They never preached or pretended to preach; and yet putting down, one his telescope, and another his parliamentary scroll, and another his electrician's wire, they all declare the adaptedness of Christ's religion to the wants and troubles of the world. If you will not take the recommendation of ministers of the Gospel, then take the recommendations of highly respectable laymen. Oh men, sceptical and struck through with unrest, would you not like to have some of the peace which broods over our souls to-night? I know all about your doubts. I have been through them all. I have gone through all the curriculum. I have doubted whether there is a God, whether Christ is God. I have doubted whether the Bible was true, I have doubted the immortality of the

soul, I have doubted my own existence, I have doubted everything; and yet, out of that hot desert of doubt I have come into the broad, luxuriant, sunshiny land of Gospel hope, and peace, and comfort; and so I have confidence in preaching to you and asking you to come in. However often you may have spoken against the Bible, or however much you may have caricatured religion, step ashore from that rocking and tumultuous sea. If you go home to-night adhering to your infidelities, you will not sleep one wink. You do not want your children to come up with your scepticism. You cannot afford to die in that midnight darkness, can you? If you do not believe in anything else, you believe in love—a father's love, a mother's love, a wife's love, a child's love. Then let me tell you that God loves you more than them all. Oh, you must come in. You will come in. The great heart of Christ aches to have you come in, and Jesus this very moment—whether you sit or stand—looks into your eyes and says: "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold."

Again I remark that the Heavenly Shepherd is going to find a great many sheep among *those who have been flung of evil habit*. It makes me mad to see Christian people give up a prodigal as lost. There are those who talk as though the grace of God were a chain of forty or fifty links, and after they had run out, there was nothing to touch the depth of a very bad case. If they were hunting and got off the track of the deer, they would look longer among the brakes and bushes for the lost game than they have been looking for that lost soul. People tell us that if a man has *delirium tremens* twice, he cannot be reclaimed; that after a woman has fallen from her integrity, she cannot be restored. The Bible has distinctly intimated that the Lord Almighty is ready to pardon four hundred and ninety times; that is, seventy times seven. There are men before the throne of

God who have wallowed in every kind of sin ; but, saved by the grace of Jesus, and washed in His blood, they stand there radiant now. There are those who plunged into the very lowest hell of Elm-street, New York, who have for the tenth time been lifted up, and finally, by the grace of God, they stand in heaven gloriously rescued by the grace promised to the chief of sinners. I want to tell you that

#### GOD LOVES TO TAKE HOLD

of a very bad case. When the Church casts you off, and when the club-room casts you off, and when society casts you off, and when business associates cast you off, and when father casts you off, and when mother casts you off, and when everybody casts you off, your first cry for help will bend the Eternal God clear down into the ditch of your suffering and shame. The Good Templars cannot save you, although they are a grand institution. The Sons of Temperance cannot save you, although they are mighty for good. Signing the temperance pledge cannot save you, although I believe in it. Nothing but the grace of the Eternal God can save you, and that will if you will throw yourself on it. There is a man in this house to-night who said to me during the week : "Unless God helps me, I cannot be delivered. I have tried everything, sir ; but now I have got in the habit of prayer, and when I come to a drinking saloon I pray that God will take me safe past, and I pray until I am past. He does help me." For every man given to strong drink there are scores of traps set ; and when he goes out on business to-morrow, with his bill of goods, on Broadway, or John-street, or Walter-street, or Fulton-avenue, or Atlantic-avenue, he will be in infinite peril, and no one but the everywhere present God can see that man through. Oh ! they talk about the catacombs of Naples, and the catacombs of Rome, and the catacombs of Egypt—the burial places under

the city where the dust of a great multitude lie; but I tell you Brooklyn has its catacombs, and New York its catacombs, and Boston its catacombs, and Philadelphia its catacombs. They are the underground restaurants, full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. Young man, you know it. God help you. There is no need of going into the art gallery to see in skilful sculpture that wonderful representation of a man and his sons wound around with serpents.

There are families represented in this house to-night that are wrapped in the martyrdom of fang and scale and venom—a living Laocoon of ghastliness and horror. What are you to do? I am not speaking into the air. I am talking to-night to hundreds of men who must be saved by Christ's Gospel, or never saved at all. What are you going to do? Do not put your trust in bromide of potassium, or in Jamaica ginger, or anything that apothecaries can mix. Put your trust only in the Eternal God, and He will see you through. Some of you do not have temptations every day. It is a periodic temptation that comes every six weeks, or every three months, when it seems as if the powers of darkness kindle around about your tongue the fires of the pit.

It is well enough, at such a time, as some of you do, to seek medical counsel; but your first and most importunate cry must be to God. If the fiends will drag you to the slaughter, make them do it on your knees. O God! now that the paroxysm of thirst is coming again upon that man, help him! Fling back into the pit of hell the fiend that assaults his soul this moment. Oh! my heart aches to see men go on in this fearful struggle without Christ.

There are to-night in this house those whose hands so tremble from dissipation that they can hardly hold a book; and yet I have to tell you that

## THEY WILL YET PREACH THE GOSPEL,

and on communion days carry around the consecrated bread, acceptable to everybody, because of their holy life, and their consecrated behaviour. The Lord is going to save you. Your home has got to be rebuilt. Your physical health has got to be restored. Your worldly business has got to be reconstructed. The Church of God is going to rejoice over your discipleship. "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold."

While I have hope for all prodigals, there are some people in this house to-night whom I give up as lost. I mean those who have been church-goers all their life, who have maintained outward morality, but who, notwithstanding twenty, thirty, forty years of Christian advantages, have never yielded their heart to Christ. They are Gospel hardened. I could call their names now, and if they would rise up they would rise up in scores. Gospel hardened! A sermon has no more effect upon them than the shining of the moon on the city pavement. As Christ says: "The publicans and harlots will go into the kingdom of God before them." They have resisted all the importunity of Divine mercy, and have gone, during these thirty years, through most powerful earthquakes of religious feeling, and they are farther away from God than ever. After awhile they will lie down sick, and some day it will be told that they are dead. No hope!

But I turn to outsiders with a hope that thrills through my body and soul. "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold." You are not Gospel hardened. You have not heard or read many sermons during the last few years. As you came in to-night everything was novel, and all the services are suggestive of your early days. How sweet the opening hymn sounded in your ears, and how blessed it is in this place! Everything suggestive of heaven. You do not

weep, but the shower is not far off. You sigh, and you have noticed that there is always a sigh in the wind before the rain falls. There are those here who would give anything if they could find relief in tears. They say: "Oh, my wasted life! Oh, the bitter past!" Oh, the graves over which I have stumbled! Whether shall I fly? Alas for the future! Everything is dark—so dark, so dark. God help me! God pity me!" Thank the Lord for that last utterance. You have begun to pray, and when a man begins to petition, that sets all heaven flying this way, and God steps in and beats back the hounds of temptation to their kennel, and around about the poor wounded soul puts the covert of His pardoning mercy. Hark! I hear something fall. What was that? It is the bars of the fence around the sheep-fold. The shepherd lets them down, and the hunted sheep of the mountain bound in; some of them their fleece torn with the brambles, some of them their feet lame with the dogs; but bounding in. Thank God! "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold."

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### THE WHOLESALE SLAUGHTER.

Who slew all these?"—2 *Kings* x. 10.

I SEE a long row of baskets coming up towards the palace of king Jehu. I am somewhat inquisitive to find out what is in the baskets. I look in and I find the gory heads of seventy slain princes. As the baskets arrive at the gate of the palace, the heads are thrown into two heaps, one on either side the gate. In the morning, the king comes out, and he looks upon the bleeding, ghastly heads of the massacred princes. Looking on either side the gate, he cries out with a ringing emphasis: "Who slew all these?"

We have, my friends, lived to see a more fearful massacre.



There is no use of my taking up your time this morning in trying to give you statistics about the devastation, and the ruin, and the death which strong drink has wrought in this country. Statistics do not seem to mean anything. We are so hardened under these statistics, that the fact that fifty thousand more men are slain, or fifty thousand less men are slain, seem, to make no positive impression on the public mind. Suffice it to say, that intemperance has slain an innumerable company of princes—the children of God's royal family; and at the gate of the Church there are two heaps of the slain; and at the door of the household there are two heaps of the slain; and at the door of the legislative hall there are two heaps of the slain; and at the door of the university there are two heaps of the slain; and at the gate of this nation there are two heaps of the slain. When I look upon the desolation I am almost frantic with the scene, while I cry out: "Who slew all these?" I can answer that question in half a minute. The ministers of Christ who have given no warning; the courts of law that have offered the licensure; the women who give strong drink on New Year's Day; the fathers and mothers who have rum on the sideboard; the hundreds of thousands of Christian men and women in the land who are staled in their indifference on this subject—they slew all these!

I am now going to tell you what I think are the sorrows and the doom of the drunkard, so that you to whom I speak may not come to the place of torment.

Some one says: "You had better let those subjects alone." Why, my brethren, we would be glad to let them alone if they would let us alone; but when I have in my pocket now four requests saying: "Pray for my husband; pray for my son; pray for my brother; pray for my friend who is the captive of strong drink," I reply: "we are ready to let that question alone when it is willing to let us alone; but

when it stands blocking up the way to heaven, and keeping multitudes who are in the house of God this morning away from Christ and heaven, I dare not be silent, lest the Lord require their blood at my hands.

I think the subject has been kept back very much by the merriment people make over those slain by strong drink. I used to be very merry over these things, having a keen sense of the ludicrous. There was

#### SOMETHING VERY GROTESQUE

in the gait of a drunkard. It is not so now, for I saw in one of the streets of Philadelphia a sight that changed the whole subject to me. There was a young man being led home. He was very much intoxicated—he was raving with intoxication. Two young men were leading him along. The boys hooted in the street, men laughed, women sneered; but I happened to be very near the door where he went in—it was the door of his father's house. I saw him go upstairs. I heard him shouting, hooting, and blaspheming. He had lost his hat, and the merriment increased with the mob until he came up to the door, and as the door was opened, his mother came out. When I heard her cry, that took all the comedy away from the scene. Since that time, when I see a man walking through the street, reeling, as I saw one last night, until he fell to the sidewalk here on Lafayette-avenue, I feel that the comedy has all gone, and it is a tragedy of groans, and tears, and heart-breaks. Never make any fun about the grotesqueness of a drunkard. Alas for his home! alas for his home!

The first suffering of the drunkard is in the *loss of his good name*. God has so arranged, it that no man ever loses his good name except through his own act. All the hatred of men and all the assaults of devils cannot destroy a man's good name, if he really maintains his integrity. If a man

is honest, and pure, and Christian, God looks after him. Although he may be bombarded for twenty or thirty years, his integrity is never lost and his good name is never sacrificed. No force on earth or in hell can capture such a Gibraltar. But when it is said of a man: "He drinks," and it can be proved, then what store wants him for a clerk? What church wants him for a member? Who will trust him? What dying man would appoint him his executor? He may have been forty years in building up his reputation—it goes down. Letters of recommendation, the backing up of business firms, a brilliant ancestry, cannot save him. The world shies off. Why? It is whispered all through the community: "He drinks; he drinks." That blasts him. When a young man loses his reputation for sobriety, he might as well be at the bottom of the sea. There are young men here who have their good name as their only capital. Your father started you out in city life. He could only give you an education. He gave you no means. He started you, however, under Christian influences. You have come to the city. You are now achieving your own fortune, under God, by your own right arm. Now

LOOK OUT, YOUNG MAN,

that there is no doubt of your sobriety. Do not create any suspicion by going in and out of liquor establishments, or by any odour of your breath, or by any glare of your eye, or by any unnatural flush of your cheek. You cannot afford to do it, for your good name is your only capital, and when that is blasted with the reputation of taking strong drink, all is gone. When I see the influences all around our young men, to destroy them, I hardly know what to say. For the young men themselves, all compassion, all sympathy, all pity. For the men who deal out the deadly stuff I have all pity, because they bring upon themselves the scorn of good

society and the retribution of God ; but for the liquor establishments themselves, and the rum-selling restaurants, may God Almighty consume them with the brightness of His coming !

Another loss which the inebriate suffers, is *that of self-respect*. Just as soon as a man wakes up and finds that he is the captive of strong drink, he feels bemeaned. I do not care how reckless he acts. He may say : " I don't care ; " he *does* care. He cannot look a pure man in the eye, unless it is with positive force of resolution. Three-fourths of his nature is destroyed ; his self-respect gone ; he says things he would not otherwise say ; he does things he would not otherwise do. When a man is nine-tenths gone with strong drink, the first thing he wants to do is to persuade you that he can stop any time he wants to. He cannot. The Philistines have bound him hand and foot, and shorn his locks, and put out his eyes, and are making him grind in the mill of a great horror. He cannot stop. I will prove it. He knows that his course is bringing disgrace and ruin upon himself. He loves himself. If he could stop he would. He knows his course is bringing ruin upon his family. He loves them. He would stop if he could. He cannot. Perhaps he could three months or a year ago ; not now. Just ask him to stop for a month. He cannot. He knows he cannot, so he does not try. I had a friend who, for fifteen years, was going down under this evil habit. He had large means. He had given thousands of dollars to Bible societies and reformatory institutions of all sorts. He was very genial and very generous, and very lovable, and whenever he talked about this evil habit he would say : " I can stop any time." But he kept going on, going on, down, down, down. His family would say : " I wish you would stop." " Why," he would reply, " I can stop at any time if I want to." After awhile he had *delirium tremens* ; he had it twice ; and yet.

after that, he said: "I could stop at any time if I wanted to." He is dead now. What killed him? Rum! Rum! And yet among his last utterances was: "I can stop at any time." He did not stop it, because he could not stop it. Oh, I want the young men of my congregation to realize the fact that there is a point in inebriation beyond which, if a man goes, he cannot stop. One of these victims said to a Christian man: "Sir, if I were told that I couldn't get a drink until to-morrow night unless I had all my fingers cut off, I would say: 'Bring the hatchet and cut them off now.'" I have a dear friend in Philadelphia, whose nephew came to him one day, and when he was exhorted about his evil habit, said: "Uncle, I can't give it up. If there stood a cannon, and it was loaded, and a glass of wine set on the mouth of that cannon, and I knew that you would fire it off just as I came up and took the glass, I would start, for I must have it." Oh, it is a sad thing for a man to wake up in this life and feel that he is a captive. He says: "I could have got rid of this once, but I can't now. I might have lived an honourable life and died a Christian death; but

#### THERE IS NO HOPE

for me now; there is no escape for me. Dead, but not buried. I am a walking corpse. I am an apparition of what I once was. I am a caged immortal, beating against the wires of my cage in this direction and in that direction; beating against the cage until there is blood on the wires and blood upon my soul, yet not able to get out. Destroyed without remedy!"

I go farther, and say that the inebriate suffers from *the loss of his usefulness*. Do you not recognise the fact that many of those who are now captives of strong drink, only a little while ago were foremost in the churches and in reformatory institutions? Do you not know that sometimes

they knelt in the family circle? Do you not know that they prayed in public, and some of them carried around the holy wine on sacramental days? Oh yes, they stood in the very front rank; but they gradually fell away. And now, what do you suppose is the feeling of such a man as that, when he thinks of his dishonoured vows and the dishonoured sacrament—when he thinks of what he might have been and of what he is now? Do such men laugh and seem very merry? Ah, there is, down in the depths of their soul, a very heavy weight. Do not wonder that they sometimes see strange things, and act very roughly in the household. You would not blame them at all, if you knew what they suffer. Do not tell such as that there is no future punishment. Do not tell him there is no such place as hell. He knows there is. *He is there now!*

I go on, and say that the inebriate suffers from *the loss of physical health*. The older men in the congregation may remember that some years ago Dr. Sewell went through this country and electrified the people by his lectures, in which he showed the effects of alcohol on the human stomach. He had seven or eight diagrams by which he showed the devastation of strong drink upon the physical system. There were thousands of people that turned back from that ulcerous sketch, swearing eternal abstinence from everything that could intoxicate.

God only knows what the drunkard suffers. Pain flies on every nerve, and travels every muscle, and gnaws every bone, and burns with every flame, and stings with every poison, and pulls at him with every torture. What reptiles crawl over his creeping limbs. What fiends stand by his midnight pillow. What groans tear his ear. What horrors shiver through his soul. Talk of the rack, talk of the Inquisition, talk of the funeral pyre, talk of the crushing Juggernaut—he feels them all at once. Have you ever been in the ward

of the hospital where these inebriates are dying, the stench of their wounds driving back the attendants, their voices sounding through the night? The keeper comes up and says: "Hush, now, be still. Stop making all this noise!" But it is effectual only for a moment, for as soon as the keeper is gone, they begin again: "Oh God! oh God! Help! help! Rum! Give me rum! Help! Take them off me! Take them off me! Oh God!" And then they shriek, and they rave, and they pluck out their hair by handfuls, and bite their nails into the quick, and then they groan, and they shriek, and they blaspheme, and they ask the keepers to kill them: "Stab me. Smother me. Strangle me. Take the devils off me!" Oh

IT IS NO FANCY SKETCH.

That thing is going on in hospitals, aye, it is going on in some of the finest private residences, in the city of Brooklyn, to-day. It went on last night while you slept, and I tell you further that this is going to be the death that some of you will die. I know it. I see it coming.

Again: the inebriate suffers through *the loss of his home*. I do not care how much he loves his wife and children, if this passion for strong drink has mastered him, he will do the most outrageous things, and if he could not get drink in any other way, *he would sell his family into eternal bondage*. How many homes in our city have been broken up in that way, no one but God knows.

Oh, is there anything that will so destroy a man for this life and damn him for the life that is to come? I hate that strong drink. With all the concentrated energies of my soul, I hate it. Do you tell me that a man can be happy when he knows that he is breaking his wife's heart and clothing his children with rags? Why, there are on the streets of our city to-day, little children, barefooted, uncombed and unkept;

want on every patch of their faded dress and on every wrinkle of their prematurely old countenance, who would have been in churches to-day, and as well clad as you are, but for the fact that rum destroyed their parents and drove them into the grave. Oh rum! thou foe of God, thou despoiler of homes, thou recruiting officer of the pit, I *abhor thee!*

But my subject takes a deeper tone, and that is, that the inebriate suffers *from the loss of the soul*. The Bible intimates that in the future world, if we are unforgiven here, our bad passions and appetites, unrestrained, will go along with us and make our torment there. So that I suppose when an inebriate wakes up in this lost world, he will feel an infinite thirst clawing on him. Now, down in the world, although he may have been very poor, he could beg or he could steal five cents. with which to get that which would slake his thirst for a little while; but in eternity, where is the rum to come from? Dives could not get one drop of water. From what chalice of eternal fire will the hot lips of the drunkard drain his draught? No one to brew it. No one to mix it. No one to pour it. No one to fetch it. Millions of worlds then for the dregs which the young man just now slung on the saw-dusted floor of the restaurant. Millions of worlds now for the rind thrown out from the punch-bowl of an earthly banquet. Dives cried for water. The inebriate cries for rum. Oh, the deep, exhausting, exasperating, everlasting thirst of the drunkard in hell! Why, if a fiend came up to earth for some infernal work in a grog-shop, and should go back taking on its wing just one drop of that for which the inebriate in the lost world longs, what excitement it would make there. Put that one drop from off the fiend's wing on the tip of the tongue of the destroyed inebriate; let the liquid brightness just touch it, let the drop be very small if it only have in it



the smack of alcoholic drink, let that drop just touch the lost inebriate in the lost world, and he would spring to his feet and cry: "That is rum! aha! that is rum!" and it would

WAKE UP THE ECHOES OF THE DAMNED:

"Give me rum! Give me rum! Give me rum!" In the future world, I do not believe that it will be the absence of God that will make the drunkard's sorrow; I do not believe that it will be the absence of light; I do not believe that it will be the absence of holiness; I think it will be the absence of strong drink. Oh! "look not upon the wine when it is red, when it moveth itself aright in the cup, for at the last, it biteth like a serpent and it stingeth like an adder."

When I see establishments all around about us, the influence of which is to destroy men for this life and the life that is to come, I feel sometimes indignant, sometimes humiliated: sometimes one emotion is dominant, and sometimes another; but if you should ask me this morning: "What are you in favour of for the purpose of extirpating this evil?" I would say: I am ready for anything that seems reasonable. You say: "Are you in favour of Sons of Temperance?" Yes. "Are you in favour of Good Templars?" "Are you in favour of Good Samaritans?" Yes. "Are you in favour of the Maine liquor law?" Yes. "Are you in favour of the woman's movement at the West?" Yes. Yes. I think that if thirty women, baptized by the Holy Spirit, in the West, could drive out all the liquor from a village of one thousand inhabitants, then if we could have in this great city three thousand consecrated women (for in proportion as the castle is great and strong you have to have troops), resolving to give themselves no peace until this foul crime was extirpated from the city, in six months three-fourths of the grog-shops would be gone. If

there be three thousand women now in this city who will put their hands and their hearts to the work, I will take the contract for driving out three-fourths of these infernal nuisances from the city in three months. If, when that host of three thousand consecrated women is marshalled, there be not one to lead them, then, as a minister of the Most High God, I will offer to take my position at the front of the host, and I will cry to them: "Come on, ye women of Christ, with your songs and your prayers! Some of you take the enemy's right wing and some the left wing. Forward! The Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge! Down with the dram-shops!"

But while I have been talking, last Sabbath and somewhat now, about the general evils, I want in conclusion to say one thing personal, for I do not like a sermon that has no personalities in it. Perhaps this has not had that fault already. I want to say, in the first place, to those who are the victims of strong drink, that while I declared some time ago that there was a point beyond which a man could not stop, I want to tell you that while a man cannot stop in his own strength, the Lord God, by His grace, can help him to stop at any time.

Last summer I was in a room in New York where there were many men who had been reclaimed from drunkenness. I heard their testimony, and for the first time in my life there flashed out a truth I never understood. They said: "We were victims of strong drink. We tried to give it up, but always failed; but somehow, since we gave our hearts to Christ, He has taken care of us." I believe that the time will soon come when the grace of God will show its power here not only to save man's soul, but his body, and reconstruct, purify, elevate, and redeem it.

I verily believe, that, although you feel grappling at the the roots of your tongues an almost omnipotent thirst, if

you will this morning give your heart to God He will help you, by His grace, to conquer. Try it. It is your last chance. I have looked off upon the desolation. Sitting under my ministry there are a good many people in awful peril; and, judging from ordinary circumstances, there is not one chance in five thousand that they will get clear of it. I see men in my congregation from Sabbath to Sabbath—my warm, personal friends—of whom I must make the remark that,

IF THEY DO NOT CHANGE THEIR COURSE,

within ten years they will, as to their bodies, lie down in drunkards' graves; and as to their souls, lie down in a drunkard's perdition. I know that it is an awful thing to say, but I can't help saying it. Oh, beware! You have not yet been captured. Beware! As ye open the door of your wine closet at noon to-day, may that decanter flash out upon you, "Beware!" and when you pour the beverage into the glass, in the foam at the top, in white letters, let there be spelled out to your soul, "Beware!" When the books of judgment are open, and ten million drunkards come up to get their doom, I want you to bear witness that I, this morning, in the fear of God, and in the love for your soul, told you with all affection, and with all kindness, to beware of that which has already exerted its influence upon your family, blowing out some of its lights—a premonition of the blackness of darkness for ever. Oh, if you could only hear this morning, Intemperance, with drunkards' bones, drumming on the head of the wine cask the dead march of immortal souls, methinks the very glance of a wine cup would make you shudder, and the colour of the liquor would make you think of the blood of the soul, and the foam on the top of the cup would remind you of the froth on the maniac's lip, and you would go home from this service and kneel down

and pray God, that rather than your children should become captives of this evil habit, you would like to carry them out some bright spring day to Greenwood, and put them away to the last sleep, until at the call of the south wind the flowers would come up all over the grave—sweet prophecies of the resurrection. God has a balm for such a wound; but what flower of comfort ever grew on the blasted heath of a drunkard's sepulchre?

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## THE RUSHING OF TEARS.

"And they called the name of that place Bochim."—*Judges* ii. 5.

JESUS preached at least one sermon to the ancient Israelites in the wilderness. He appeared not with the look that Leonardo da Vinci ascribes to Him in the Milan fresco, nor that which Tiberius gives Him in the emerald intaglio, nor as Paul de la Roche and Albrecht Durer sketch Him, but in the shape of an angel. There was a great audience in the open air. The surrounding galleries of the mountains were filled with the people. Christ, in the form of an angel, preaches to these Israelites about how He had brought them out from Egypt into Canaan; and while He is preaching they can hear again the snapping of their chains, and see the crystallization of the Red Sea into towers of triumph for them, and into a sarcophagus of death for their pursuers. And again they see quails all round about when they wanted meat; and again the rock seems to break into water as they wanted drink; and again they see the cloudy pillar that beckoned them when they wanted a supernatural commander-in-chief; and they think of how Canaan put clusters in their lap and song in their mouth, and the trees dropped with honey, and the full-uddered cattle, coming up from the pastures, yielding delicious supply. Oh, what a change be-

tween the dusty brick-kilns of Egypt, where they had toiled under a task-master, and this land of Canaan, full of music, and mirth, and gardens, and sunshine. But Jesus, in the form of an angel, goes on, and in the second head of His discourse He tells them how they had wickedly made an alliance with the Canaanites, and as He displays the height and depth of their ingratitude, they hang their heads, and one deep sigh after another is heard. Here, an aged man, overwhelmed with memories, groans aloud; and yonder, a young man responds to it in like exclamation. Soon the tears start in all the eyes of that great audience—tears of sorrow, tears of contrition, tears of peril—and the whole congregation breaks down into sobbing and wailing, and wring their hands, and make outcry that pierces the heavens. Alas, what a spectacle! Hundreds of thousands of people in lamentation. “And they called the name of that place Bochim,” or the place of weeping.

If this hour we could realize God’s goodness toward us, and our conduct toward Him, a great grief would seize upon this audience, and on these aisles repentance would meet remorse, and remorse would meet ingratitude, and memories of the past would jostle the fears of the future, and the silence of this occasion would be broken by sobs, and groans, and shrieks, and the place would be called a Bochim. Oh, may God’s Omnipotent Spirit now shake this audience with arousal and conviction, as though it were the heart of one man. Amen! So let it be, Lord Jesus.

I have, in the first place, to remark, that many of these Christian people have reason for

#### A GOOD DEAL OF MOURNING.

What have you been doing these ten, twenty, thirty, forty years? Did not God lead you out of Egypt? Did He not part for you the Red Sea of trouble, and has He not rained

manna all around about your camp? Did He not divide the Jordan of death for your loved ones, until they went through dry-shod, not wetting even the soles of their feet? Has He not put clusters of blessings upon your table, and fed you with the finest of the wheat? Mercies above you. Mercies beneath you. Mercies on the right hand, and mercies on the left hand. Mercies before you. Mercies behind you. Mercies within you. And yet, we must confess, we have, like the Israelites, made a league with the world. Three-fourths of our Christian life has been wasted. Opportunities for usefulness gone for ever. Golden sickles placed in our hand, yet no harvest reaped. Silken nets of the Gospel at our disposal, yet no fish caught. Going along toward heaven, while there are a thousand millions of the race unwarned, unblessed, unsaved. Our path toward heaven a zig-zag path, now on the Lord's side, now on the world's side—"hale fellows well met" with men who despise God. The beach strewn with vessels breaking on the rocks, and we too cowardly to wade down waist deep, or even ankle deep, and give a hand to those who are struggling in the surf lying across the path toward heaven, until men have come up where we are, and stumbled over us, and fallen, never to rise. Has not this been the history of many here? The robes of our Christian profession scattered with the blood of lost souls; God holding us responsible for sorrows that we did not appease, and for ruin that we did not avert. Oh, that God would to-night break our hearts with the fact of our inconsistencies as professors of religion, and rouse us up to a self-scrutiny, and an imploration, and a lamentation, that would make this place a Bochim, a place of weeping. I believe that there are souls in hell that would not have been there if you and I had done our duty. Oh, weep for our derelictions! weep for our wanderings! weep for our lost opportunities that will never return!

There is great reason for sadness on the part of some of these parents when they look over their families. You know that there must be a mighty change in your household before you can all live together in eternity. A few years at the most, and the separation must take place. Your common sense teaches you that, if there be two paths, and they diverge, and after the point of divergence they keep on in a straight line, they go farther and farther off from each other; and, as by inexorable mathematical law, as well as by moral law, if one goes to the right, in a religious sense, and the other to the left, they cannot come together. Can you sit to-night placidly and contemplate an eternal separation from any of your loved ones? Things are looking that way. Their opportunities of salvation less and less. Your opportunities of plying them with religious motives less and less. The prospect that God's invitation will continue to them, less and less. The day of their mercy almost gone, yet they have not put up one earnest prayer, or repented of one sin, and not given one hopeful sign, and death coming to snap the conjugal bond, and break up the fraternal and the filial tie. Oh, sister, canst thou bear to think of being for eternity away from thy brother? Oh, wife, for unending ages away from thy husband? Christian mother, is your daughter on the wrong side? Christian father, will you be on the right hand of the Judge at the last, and see your son on the left hand, far away,

#### CHAINED AMID CAPTIVES TRUDGING OFF?

Are you ready for such a farewell word? Is there anything that can pay you for it? The comforts of your present home, your domestic reunions? No, no. There is nothing on earth that can pay for that. I announce what I believe will be the history of some families represented in this house to-night: part of the family will spend eternity in heaven,

and part of the family will spend an eternity in hell! Oh, if that thought could come with its overwhelming power upon you, as it ought, there would be a shudder through this audience, and you would sweat as though it were great drops of blood. Parents would cry out to God, and cry out to the people: "Save my children!" The wife would cry out: "Save my husband!" The sister would cry out: "Save my brother!" And this audience would be struck with a wild tempest of agony, and this place would be a Bochim, for weeping. Oh, there has been a very great change in some of the families in my church during the last two or three weeks. Some of them have come into the kingdom, but left others outside. There have been cases where the husband has chosen Christ, and the wife has resisted Divine mercy. Last Sabbath night, in the adjoining room, an aged woman came in. I said: "Are you seeking the salvation of your soul?" She said: "No, I have sought and found. I came in to ask your prayers for my sons. They are on the wrong road." O Lord Jesus, are we to be parted from any we have loved? Will some of us be saved and some of us be lost? Which one will it be missing, missing, missing, for eternity? Oh, bow your head in silent prayer, and ask God for the redemption of all the loved ones of the household. Lay hold of God in an importunate petition now. Hush! Let it be a moment of silent prayer all through the audience.

I say farther: there are impenitent souls here who ought to be sad from the fact that there are sins they have committed that cannot be corrected either in this world or the world to come. I am not speaking of the unpardonable sin; but I will illustrate what I mean. Suppose there is a man in this audience that to-night, at fifty years of age, becomes a Christian, but he has been all his life on the other side. He is a father. He comes to Christ to-night; but can he



arrest the fact that for twenty or thirty years, over his children, he was wielding a wrong influence, and they have started in the wrong direction? Suppose a company of ship-owners started a sea captain with an imperfect chart and with an unseaworthy vessel, and after the vessel has been gone five days they feel sorry about it, and wish they had not let the vessel go out in that way. Does that make any difference to those who have gone out? No! In the first storm the captain and the crew go down. And if you come to God in the latter part of your life, when you have given your children an impulse in the wrong direction, those ten, or fifteen, or twenty years of example in the wrong direction will be mightier than the few words you can utter now in the right direction. So it is with the influence you have had anywhere in community. If you have all these years given countenance to those who are neglecting religion,

#### CAN YOU CORRECT THAT?

Your common sense says no. Here is an engineer on a locomotive. He is taking a long train of cars loaded with passengers. He comes on and sees a red flag. He says: "What do I care for the red flag?" He pushes on the train, and comes to another red flag. He says: "I don't care for the red flag." After a while he sees that the bridge is down; but he is by a marsh, and he leaps and is not damaged. Does that stop the train? No! It goes on crash! crash! crash! That is the history of some men who have been converted to-night. I congratulate them, but I cannot hide the fact that they started a train of influences in the wrong direction; and though, in the afternoon of their life, they may leap off the train, the train goes on. A man said to me during the week: "I am fifty-three years of age, and I have made up my mind that it is time for me to become a Christian." I congratulated him in coming; but,

I must say to all those who come in the afternoon of life you have let your best chances go—there is no hiding that—your best talents gone, your best opportunities of usefulness gone. You cannot hide the fact that you have had only one life to live on earth, and you have thrown the most of it away. It is enough to make one weep most bitter tears; it is enough to make this house a very Bochim.

So, also, there is occasion for sadness in the peril that surrounds every unforgiven soul. "Oh," you say: "it is a starlight night. The wind is blowing from the west. All is fair. There is no danger." I am not speaking of temporal, but of spiritual, danger. You say: "I don't see any spiritual danger." Then I remember that summer before last, on shipboard at evening time, we were romping up and down the decks with laughter, and shout, and song. We were a very merry party at eventime; but in a few hours there were between seven hundred and eight hundred people groaning and crying, and shrieking at what seemed the foundering of the ship. Sails all gone. Booms lost. Lifeboats crushed to kindling-wood on the side of the vessel. On the blanched cheeks of the captain, crew, and passengers, one word written: "Shipwreck!" And so you may go on placidly, smoothly, gaily for awhile in your sin, but the hurricane will swoop upon your souls. Perils from above and perils from beneath push you to the abyss. Out of Christ not one moment's safety. Without God, without hope. Oh, what an orphanage, what an exile, what a desolation! Who will go your bail? Who will help out your immortal spirit? Moan! moan! for thy lost estate.

Have you not had a chance for heaven? "Ah," you say: "that is the worst of it. That is what makes me weep." Was your father bad? Was your mother wicked? "No," you say. "Say nothing against my mother. If there was ever a good woman, she was one; and I remember how, in

her old days, and when bent with years, and in her plain frock, she knelt down and prayed for my soul, and with her apron wiped away the tears. I can never forget it. She is gone now, and I gave her no intimation that I would ever meet her again. Oh, I have trampled on her broken heart. I am a wretch undone. Who will pray for me? I am so sick of sin. I am so weary of the world!"

NO WONDER YOU WEEP,

for the greatest condemnation of the last day will be for those who had pious parents and who resisted their admonition. Oh! to go through a lost eternity carrying the remembrance of a family altar at which you were taught to kneel, and the "Now I lay me down to sleep" that you were taught to pray, and the death-bed of father and mother where with their last words they importuned you to do your duty! Oh! that memory will be heavier than the chain; *that* will be hotter than the fire. May God Almighty keep us from the overwhelming woe that comes down upon that man's head who tramples on a father's counsel and on an old mother's prayer.

But what is a sadder thought is, that some of these people not only stay out of the kingdom of God themselves, but they will not let their children come in. I have to charge some parents who are here with the fact that they hinder their loved ones from coming into the kingdom. If you would only give them one encouraging word, or if you would only get out of the way with your worldly example, they would have some chance. But no; you stay back from Christ and the Church yourselves, and you keep them back. Oh! father, mother, if you are determined to go down to death, do not take your children with you. If you will not stand back, say: "I am going to take the plunge, but don't *you* do it." You sound no alarm. They are in the same

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boat with you. You are rowing on towards an eternal Niagara. You have almost come to the plunge, and yet you drop not the oars, you clutch not the side of the boat. You cry not out to the shore for help. You trip them up. You know it is an easy thing to trip one up, especially if he comes at a bounding gait; and you see your loved ones coming on towards heaven, and you put out your foot and they fall over it into a sinful life here, and after twenty, thirty, forty years have passed will fall deeper down, and it will be known for ever that you tripped them up. Oh! by the solemn birth-hour when your life was spared and another given, by the memories of the family hearth, by the account which you must give at the last day for your performance of your duty in regard to those children, I implore you not to hinder them. "But," you say, "I do not hinder them." You do. Your children feel it. Christians feel it. Angels of God feel it. The Lord Jesus Christ feels it. That father and mother who stay away from Christ themselves are bringing on all controlling and potential influence to keep their children back. There are parents here, all wrapped up in worldliness and fashion, who are actually blocking up the way to heaven for the entire family. They think more of the trimmings on their hats and the jewels on their fingers than of the souls of the immortals for which they must answer when the world is on fire. Oh, that the prophet's rod would strike the rock to-night and make it weep, and that this place might be a Bochim—parents praying for their children, children praying for their parents, the husband praying for the wife, the wife praying for the husband, the pastor praying for the people, the people praying for the pastor, this whole audience whelmed with one wave of penitence and pardon! Oh parent! coming up at the last day, how will you stand it if these children grow up into lives of sin, living to old age in impenitence, and then meeting you in

the judgment, deliberately charge you with the ruin of their soul, saying: "You never invited me to Christ. You stood in my way. You gave a wrong example. Father, mother, you ruined my soul?"

But I remember that there are tears of joy as well as tears of sorrow, and how the foundations of the deep would break up to-night if one hundred or one thousand souls in this audience would march up and take the kingdom of heaven! This place has been a Bochim. It was last Sabbath, here and in the adjoining room. It was last Monday. It was last Wednesday. It was last Friday. It was this morning. It is now a Bochim for weeping for joy. Right here, on this very seat, last Sabbath night, there sat a sea-captain. He seemed very restless under the sermon. I thought he was offended, and would go out. When the service was closed he came into the adjoining room, his face shining with joy, and he told us that that night.

#### HE HAD FOUND CHRIST,

and then he told how, during the gale at sea, he vowed to be a Christian, but when the sea went down and the storm was past he forgot his vow. "Now," he says, "I start for heaven." He could not keep the story to himself. He was telling to those who were around about him in the room what a joyful thing it was to follow Christ. Oh! it was a Bochim all around about where the man stood, and he said as he passed out of the door: "Pray for me. I sail to-morrow for San Domingo." The same night there came a child, her face radiant with gladness, holding her father by the hand. She had found the Saviour the week before. Now she was bringing her father. He also found Jesus. Then the man who said he was "past feeling" asked us to pray for him. And then there were aged ones who came in the eleventh hour and got Divine pardon; and there were altars set up

in families where there had never been any prayer ; and lips that had never spoken the name of Jesus, save in blasphemy, have been all this week singing : " There's none like Jesus. Oh, hallelujah ! " And the place has been a Bochim.

But there are some who have not come. They will not come. They will not repent. They will not pray. They will not ask any one else to pray for them. Their hearts are too proud. With a stout grip they seize the door of God's mercy and shut it against their souls. They lay hold of the rope of the bell, so that they may strike the death-knell of their own immortal spirit. " The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and they are not saved. " Floating out farther and farther into the darkness, I wave them one last farewell, and I feel helpless when I stand before them. I think of no other argument drawn from death, judgment, or eternity, or the cross of the Son of God, and I feel very much as the people did on Long Island coasts some years ago when a vessel was driving on the rocks. The people on shore could do nothing. They saw the danger and knew the shipwreck was coming, and ran up and down the beach wringing their hands. So to-night I see these vessels coming for the rocks. I cannot help them. I run up and down the shore crying : " Stand off ! Put back ! Stop, stop ! " But it seems to do no good.

I rejoice that there will be whole families to-night that will come to Jesus. In Georgia, some years ago, there were two men who had broken their mother's heart by lives of dissipation. They went home to see her. It came the time for them to go back, and they said : " Now, mother, we go back to-night at nine o'clock. " " Well, " she said, " boys " (however old they may get they are never anything but boys to a mother)—she said : " Boys, go to church ; they're going to have religious service there. " Her heart was aching for their salvation, but she did not want to tell them. " Oh ! "

they said, "we're going off at nine o'clock." "Well," she said, "you will hear the stage-horn blow, and you can then go out and take the stage." So they went; but before the stage-horn blew

#### THEY HEARD A DIFFERENT SOUND.

It was that which pealed forth from the silver trumpet of the Gospel, and their souls quaked under the sound. They did not go away that night; and on the following night, when, at the close of the service, the minister of Christ asked that all those who were seeking their soul's salvation should come up and kneel at the altar, the first that started were these two men; and they knelt there asking for salvation; and while they were kneeling there, there was an aged woman who arose in the midst of the audience, her face all saturated with tears, and the people said: "Who is she? Who is she? Why does she stand up and disturb the assembly? All the rest are sitting." Oh, she had a right to stand up. She was the Christian mother of those two young men. She had prayed for their salvation so long, she had a right to stand and look as they knelt down at the foot of Divine mercy. She had sown in tears—she had a right to reap in tearful joy. And to-night, if the prodigals would only come and kneel down at the foot of the cross, there would be others standing up to watch. The world might stand up and scoff, but there would be others standing up with different motives—parents standing up to watch as the prodigals came. They would be glad with an infinite gladness, if their children were saved. And there would be companions in life who would rejoice as *their* companion came. They would say: "Now, we are one for ever. Married on earth to be married in heaven." The angels of God would stand, harp in hand, watching, and ready to strike the symphony. The Lord Jesus Christ Himself would stand watching—Him of the

crushed foot, and the mangled brow, and the cleft heart, saying: "My soul is satisfied. I have loved thee with an everlasting love." There would be tears of joy mingling with tears of sorrow, and it would be told in the ages to come that on this Sabbath night, between these walls, because of the weeping over sin, and the weeping over pardon, the place was a Bochim.

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### THE PROCESSION HALTED.

"Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. And he came and touched the bier; and they that bare *him* stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother."—LUKE vii, 12-15.

THE text calls us to stand at the gate of the city of Nain. The streets are full of business and gaiety, and the car is deafened with the hammers of mechanism and the wheels of traffic. Work, with its thousand arms, and thousand eyes, and thousand feet, fills all the street, when suddenly the crowd parts, and a funeral passes. Between the wheels of work and pleasure there comes a long procession of mourning people. Who is it? A trifler says: "Oh, it is nothing but a funeral. It may have come up from the hospital of the city, or the almshouse, or some low place of the town;" but not so, says the serious observer. There are so many evidences of tired bereavement that we know at the first glance some one has been taken away greatly beloved; and to our inquiry: "Who is this that is carried out with so many offices of kindness and affection?" the reply comes: "The only son of his mother, and she a widow." Stand back and let the procession pass out! Hush all the voices of mirth and plea-



sure ! Let every head be uncovered ! Weep with this passing procession, and let it be told through all the market places and bazaars of Nain, that in Galilee, to-day, the sepulchre hath gathered to itself "the only son of his mother, and she a widow."

There are two or three things that, in my mind, give especial pathos to this scene. The first is, *he was a young man* that was being carried out. To the aged, death becomes beautiful. The old man halts and pants along the road where once he bounded like the roe. From the midst of immedicable ailment and sorrows, he cries out: "How long, oh Lord, how long?" Foot-sore and hardly bestead on the hot journey, he wants to get home. He sits in the church and sings, with a very tremulous voice, some tune he sang forty years ago, and longs to join the better assemblage of the one hundred and forty and four thousand, and the thousands of thousands who have passed the flood. How sweetly he sleeps the last sleep. Push back the white locks from the wrinkled temples ; they will never ache again. Fold the hands over the still heart ; they will never toil again. Close gently the eyes ;

THEY WILL NEVER WEEP AGAIN.

But this man that I am speaking of was a young man. He was just putting on the armour of life, and he was exulting to think how his sturdy blows would ring out above the clangour of the battle. I suppose he had a young man's hopes, a young man's ambition, and a young man's courage. He said: "If I live many years, I will feed the hungry and clothe the naked. In this city of Nain, where there are so many bad young men, I will be sober, and honest, and pure, and magnanimous, and my mother shall never be ashamed of me." But all these prospects are blasted in one hour. There he passes lifeless in the procession. Behold all that

is left on earth of the high-hearted young man of the city of Nain.

There is another thing that adds very much to this scene, and that is, he was an *only* son. However large the family flock may be, we never could think of sparing one of the lambs. Though they may all have their faults, they all have their excellencies that commend them to their parental heart; and if it were peremptorily demanded of you to-day, that you should yield up one of your children out of a very large family, you would be confounded, and you could not make a selection. But this was an only son, around whom gathered all the parental expectations. How much care in his education. How much caution in watching his habits. He would carry down the name to other times. He would have entire control of the family property long after the parents had gone to their last reward. He would stand in society a thinker, a worker, a philanthropist, a Christian. No, no. It is all ended. Behold him there. Breath is gone. Life is extinct. The only son of his mother.

There was one other thing that added to the pathos of this scene, and that was, his mother was a widow. The main hope of that home had been broken, and now he was come up to be the staff. The chief light of the household had been extinguished, and this was the only light left. I suppose she often said, looking at him: "There are only two of us." Oh, it is a grand thing to see a young man step out in life, and say to his mother: "Don't be down-hearted. I will, as far as possible, take father's place, and as long as I live you shall never want anything." But alas! it is not always that way. Sometimes the young people get tired of the old people. They say they are queer; that they have so many ailments; and they sometimes wish them out of the way. A young man and his wife sat at the table, their little son on the floor playing beneath the table. The old grandfather was

very old, and his hand shook so, they said: "You shall no more sit with us at the table." And so they gave him a place in the corner, where day by day he ate out of an earthen bowl—everything put into that bowl. One day his hand trembled so much he dropped it, and it broke, and the son, seated at the elegant table in midfloor, said to his wife: "Now, we'll get father a wooden bowl, and that he can't break." So a wooden bowl was obtained, and every day old grandfather ate out of that, sitting in the corner. One day, while the elegant young man and his wife were seated at their table, with chased silver and all the luxuries, and their little son sat upon the floor, they saw the lad whittling, and they said: "My son, what are you doing there with that knife?" "Oh," said he, "I—I'm making a trough for my father and mother to eat out of when they get old!"

But this young man of the text was not of that character. He did not belong to that school. I can tell it from the way they mourned over him. He was to be the companion of his mother. He was to be his mother's protector. He would return now some of the kindnesses he had received in the days of childhood and boyhood. Aye, he would with his strong hand uphold that form already enfeebled with age. Will he do it? No. In one hour all that promise of help and companionship is gone.

#### THERE IS A WORLD OF ANGUISH

in that one short phrase, "The only son of his mother, and she a widow."

Now, my friends, it was upon this scene that Christ broke. He came in without any introduction. He stopped the procession.

He had only two utterances to make: the one to the mourning mother, the other to the dead. He cried out to the mourning one: "Weep not:" and then, touching the

bier on which the son lay, He cried out: "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise! And he that was dead sat up."

I learn two or three things from this subject; and first, that Christ *was a man*. You see how that sorrow played upon all the chords of His heart. I think we forget this too often. Christ was a man more certainly than you are, for He was a perfect man. No sailor ever slept in ship's hammock more soundly than Christ slept in that boat on Gennessaret. In every nerve, and muscle, and bone, and fibre of His body—in every emotion and affection of His heart—in every action and decision of His mind, He was a man. He looked off upon the sea just as you look off upon the waters. He went into Martha's house just as you go into a cottage. He breathed hard when He was tired, just as you do when you are exhausted. He felt after sleeping out a night in the storm just like you do when you have been exposed to a tempest. It was just as humiliating for Him to beg bread as it would be for you to become a pauper. He felt just as much insulted by being sold for thirty pieces of silver as you would if you were sold for the price of a dog. From the crown of the head to the sole of the foot He was a man. Oh, when the thorns were twisted for His brow, they hurt Him just as much as they would hurt your brow, if they were twisted for it. He took not on Him the nature of angels; He took on Him the seed of Abraham. *Ecce Homo*—Behold the man!

But I must also draw from this subject that *He was a God*. Suppose that a man should now attempt to break up funeral obsequies. He would be seized by the law, he would be imprisoned, if he were not actually slain by the mob before the officers could secure him. If Christ had been a mere mortal, would He have had a right to come in upon such a procession? Would He have succeeded in His interruption? He was more than a man, for when He cried out:

"I say unto thee, arise! He that was dead sat up." Oh, what excitement there must have been thereabouts. The body had lain prostrate. It had been mourned over with agonizing tears, and yet now it begins to move in the shroud, and to be flushed with life; and at the command of Christ he rises up and looks into the faces of the astonished spectators. Oh, this was the work of a God. I hear it in His voice; I see it in the flash of His eye; I behold it in the snapping of death's shackles; I see it in the face of the rising slumberer; I hear it in the outcry of all those who were spectators of the scene. If, when I see my Lord Jesus Christ mourning with the bereaved, I put my hands on His shoulders, and say: "My brother," now that I hear Him proclaim supernatural deliverances, I look up into His face and say with Thomas: "My Lord and my God." Do you not think He was a God? A great many people do not believe that, and they compromise the matter, or they think they compromise it. They say He was a very good man, but He was not a God. That is impossible. He was

EITHER A GOD OR A WRETCH,

and I will prove it. If a man professes to be that which he is not, what is he? He is a liar, an impostor, a hypocrite. That is your unanimous verdict. Now, Christ professed to be a God. He said over and over again He was a God, took the attributes of a God, and assumed the works and offices of a God. Dare you now say He was not? He was a God or He was a wretch. Choose ye. Do you think I cannot prove by this Bible that He was a God? If you do not believe the Bible, of course there is no need of my talking with you. There is no common data from which to start. Suppose you do believe it? Then I can demonstrate that He was Divine. I can prove that He was creator (John i. 3): "All things were made by Him; and without Him was

not anything made that was made." He was eternal (Rev. xiii. 13): "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." I can prove He was omnipotent (Heb. i. 10): "The heavens are the work of Thine hands." I can prove He was omniscient (John ii. 25): "He knew what was in man." Oh, yes, He is a God. He cleft the sea. He upheaved the crystalline walls along which the Israelites marched. He planted the mountains. He raises up governments and casts down thrones, and marches across nations, and across worlds, and across the universe. Eternal, omnipotent, unhindered, and unabashed. That hand that was nailed to the cross holds the stars in a leash of love. That head that dropped on the bosom, in fainting and death, shall make the world quake at its nod. That voice that groaned in the last pang shall swear before the trembling world that time shall be no longer. Oh, do not insult the common sense of the race, by telling us that this glorious person was only a man, in whose presence the paralytic arm was thrust out well, and the devils crouched, and the lepers dropped their scales, and the tempests folded their wings, and the boy's satchel of a few loaves made a banquet for five thousand, and the sad procession of my text broke out in congratulation and hosanna.

Again, I learn from this subject that Christ was a sympathizer. Mark you, this was a city funeral. In the country, when the bell tolls, they know all about it for five miles around, and they know what was the matter with the man, how old he was, and what were his last experiences. They know with what temporal prospects he has left his family. There is no haste, there is no indecency, in the obsequies. There is nothing done as a mere matter of business. Even the children come out as the procession passes, and look sympathetic, and the tree-shadows seem to deepen, and the brooks weep in sympathy as the procession goes by. But,

mark you, this that I am speaking of was a city funeral. In great cities the cart jostles the hearse, and there is mirth and gladness and indifference as the weeping procession goes by. In the city of Nain it was a common thing to have trouble, and bereavement, and death. Christ saw it every day there. Perhaps that very hour there were others being carried out; but this frequency of trouble did not harden Christ's heart at all.

HE STEPPED RIGHT OUT,

and He saw this mourner, and He had compassion on her, and He said: "Weep not." Now I have to tell you, oh bruised souls, and there are many here to-day (have you ever looked over an audience like this and noticed how many shadows of sorrow there are? You cannot, where you sit, see them, but I can from where I stand), I come to all such to-day and say: "Christ meets you, and He has compassion on you, and He says: 'Weep not.'" Perhaps with some it is financial trouble. "Oh!" you say, "it is such a silly thing for a man to cry over lost money." Is it? Suppose you had a large fortune, and all luxuries brought to your table, and your wardrobe was full, and your home was beautified by music, and sculpture, and painting, and thronged by the elegant and educated, and then some rough misfortune should strike you in the face, and trample your treasures, and taunt your children for their faded dress, and send you into commercial circles an underling where once you waved a sceptre of gold, don't you think you would cry then? I think you would. But Christ comes and meets all such to-day. He sees all the straits in which you have been thrust. He observes the sneer of that man who once was proud to walk in your shadow and glad to get your help. He sees the protested note, the uncanceled judgment, the foreclosed mortgage, the heart-breaking exasperation, and

He says : " Weep not. I own the cattle on a thousand hills. I will never let you starve. From my hand the fowls of heaven peck all their food. And will I let you starve ? Never —no, my child, never."

Or perhaps this tramp at the gate of Nain has an echo in your own bereft spirit. You went out to the grave, and you felt you never could come back again. You left your heart there. The white snow of death covered all the garden. You listen for the speaking of voices that will never be heard again and the sounding of feet that will never move in your dwelling again, and there is this morning, while I speak, a dull, heavy, leaden pressure on your heart. God has dashed out the light of your eyes, and the heavy spirit that that woman carried out of the gate of Nain is no heavier than yours. And you open the door, but he comes not in. And you enter the nursery, but she is not there. And you sit at the table, but there is a vacant chair next to you. And the sun does not shine as brightly as it used to, and the voices of affection do not strike you with so quick a thrill, and your cheek has not so healthy a hue, and your eye has not so deep a fire. Do I not know ? Do we not all know ? There is an unlifted woe on your heart. You have been carrying out your loved one beyond the gate of the city of Nain. But look yonder. Some one stands watching. He seems waiting for you. As you come up He stretches out His hand of help. His voice is full of tenderness, yet thrills with eternal strength. Who is it ? The very One who accosted the mourner at the gate of Nain, and He says : " Weep not."

Perhaps it is a worse grief than that. It may be a *living* home trouble that you cannot speak about to your best friend. It may be some domestic unhappiness. It may be an evil suspicion. It may be the disgrace following in the footsteps of a son that is wayward, or a companion who is cruel, or a father that will not do right ; and for years there may have



been a vulture striking its beak into the vitals of your soul, and you sit there to-day feeling it worse than death. It is. It is worse than death. And yet there is relief. Though the night may be the blackest, though the voices of hell may tell you to curse God and die, look up and hear the voice that accosted the woman of the text, as it says: "Weep not."

"Earth has no sorrow  
That heaven cannot cure."

I learn again from all this that Christ is *the master of the grave*. Just outside the gate of the city Death and Christ measured lances, and when the young man rose, Death dropped. Now we are sure of our resurrection. Oh! what a scene it was when that young man came back! The mother never expected to hear him speak again. She never thought that he would kiss her again. How the tears started and her heart throbbed as she said: "Oh, my son, my son, my son!" And that scene is going to be repeated. It is going to be repeated ten thousand times. These broken family circles have got to come together. These extinguished household lights have got to be rekindled. There will be a stir in the family lot in the cemetery, and there will be a rush into life at the command: "Young man, I say unto thee, arise!" As the child shakes off the dust of the tomb and comes forth fresh, and fair, and beautiful, and you throw your arms around it and press it to your heart, angel to angel will repeat the story of Nain: "He delivered him to his mother." Did you notice that passage in the text as I read it? "He delivered him to his mother." Oh, ye troubled souls! oh, ye who have lived to see every prospect blasted, paled, scattered, consumed! wait a little. The seed-time of tears will become the wheat harvest. In a clime cut of no wintry blast, under a sky palled by no hurtling tempest, amid re-deemed ones that weep not, that part not, that die not, friend will come to friend, and kindred will join kindred, and the

long procession that marches along the avenues of gold will lift up their psalms as again and again it is announced that the same One who came to the relief of this woman of the text came to the relief of many a maternal heart, and repeated the wonders of resurrection and "delivered him to his mother." Oh! that will be the harvest of the world. That will be the coronation of princes. That will be the Sabbath of eternity.

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### THINGS WE NEVER GET OVER.

"All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come."—*Matthew* xii. 31, 32.

"He found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears."—*Hebrews* xii. 17.

LET it be understood at the outset that the Protestant pulpit has no revelation not given to the Protestant pew. The minister of Christ has no right to lord it over the consciences of men. When we preach, we do not utter edicts; we only offer opinions. Let the old mother of harlots from the Vatican issue the *fiat* that makes the people bow down into the dust; but in this land, and in this age, where King James's translation is in almost every hand and in almost every house, let every man understand that he has a right, equally with others, to interpret the Word of God for himself, asking only Divine illumination.

As sometimes you gather the whole family around, in the evening, to hear some interesting book read, so to-night we gather—a great Christian family group—to study this text; and now may one and the same lamp cast its glow on all this vast circle of immortal souls..

You see from the first passage that I read, that there is a

sin against the Holy Ghost for which a man is never pardoned. Once having committed it, he is bound hand and foot for the dungeons of despair. Sermons may be preached to him, songs may be sung to him, prayers may be offered in his behalf; but all to no purpose. He is a captive for this world and a captive for the world that is to come. Do you suppose that there is any one in this house to-night that has committed that sin? All sins are against the Holy Ghost; but my text speaks of *one* especially. It is very clear to my own mind that the sin against the Holy Ghost was the ascribing of the works of the Spirit to the agency of the devil in the time of the apostles. Indeed, the Bible distinctly tells us that. In other words, if a man had sight given to him, or if another was raised from the dead, and some one standing there should say: "This man got his sight by satanic power, the Holy Spirit did not do this, Beelzebub accomplished it;" or, "This man raised from the dead was raised by satanic influence," the man who said that dropped down under the curse of the text, and had committed the fatal sin against the Holy Ghost. Now I do not think it possible in this day to commit that sin. I think it was possible only in apostolic times. But it is a very terrible thing ever to say anything against the Holy Ghost, and it is a marked fact that our race have been marvellously kept back from that profanity. You hear a man swear by the name of the Eternal God, and by the name of Jesus Christ, but you never heard a man swear by the name of the Holy Ghost. There are those in this house who fear they are guilty of the unpardonable sin. Have you such anxiety? Then I have to tell you positively that

YOU HAVE NOT COMMITTED THAT SIN,

because the very anxiety is a result of the movement of the gracious Spirit, and your anxiety is proof positive, as cer-

tainly as anything that can be demonstrated in mathematics, that you have not committed the sin that I have been speaking of. I can look off upon this audience and feel that there is salvation for all. It is not like when they put out with those life-boats from the *Loch Earn* for the *Ville du Havre*. They knew there was not room for all the passengers, but they were going to do as well as they could. But to-night we man the life-boat of the Gospel, and we cry out over the sea: "Room for all." Oh that the Lord Jesus Christ would, this hour, bring you all out of the flood of sin and plant you on the deck of this glorious old Gospel craft. But while I have said I do not think it is possible for us to commit the particular sin spoken of in the first text, I have by reason of the second text to call your attention to the fact that there are sins which, though they may be pardoned, are in some respects irrevocable, and you can find no place for repentance, though you seek it carefully with tears. Esau had a birthright given him. In olden times it meant not only temporal but spiritual blessing. One day Esau took this birthright and traded it off for something to eat. Oh, the folly! But let us not be too severe upon him, for some of us may have committed the same folly. After he had made the trade, he wanted to get it back. Just as though you to-morrow morning should take all your notes, and bonds, and Government securities, and should go into a restaurant, and in a fit of recklessness and hunger throw all those securities on the counter and ask for a plate of food, making that exchange. This was the one that Esau made. He sold his birthright for a mess of pottage, and he was very sorry about it afterwards; but "he found no place for repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears."

There is an impression in almost every man's mind that somewhere in the future there will be a chance where he can correct all his mistakes. Live as we may, if we only repent

in time, God will forgive us, and then all will be as well as though we had never committed sin. My discourse shall come in collision with that theory. I shall show you, my friends, as God will help me, that there is such a thing as unsuccessful repentance; that there are things done wrong that always stay wrong, and for them you may seek some place of repentance, and seek it carefully, but never find it.

Belonging to this class of irrevocable mistakes is

#### THE FOLLY OF A MISSPENT YOUTH.

We may look back to our college days and think how we neglected chemistry, or geology, or botany, or mathematics. We may be sorry about it all our days. Can we ever get the discipline or the advantage that we would have had had we attended to those duties in early life? A man wakes up at forty years of age and finds that his youth has been wasted, and he strives to get back his early advantages. Does he get them back? the days of boyhood, the days in college, the days under his father's roof? "Oh!" he says: "If I could only get those times back again, how I would improve them!"

My brother, you will never get them back. They are gone, gone. You may be very sorry about it, and God may forgive so that you may at last reach heaven; but you will never get over some of the mishaps that have come to your soul as a result of your neglect of early duty. You may try to undo it; you cannot undo it. When you had a boy's arms, and a boy's eyes, and a boy's heart, you ought to have attended to those things. A man says at fifty years of age: "I do wish I could get over these habits of indolence." When did you get them? At twenty or twenty-five years of age. You cannot shake them off. They will hang to you to the very day of your death. If a young man, through a long course of evil conduct, undermines his physical health, and then repents of it in after life, the Lord may pardon him; but

that does not bring back good physical condition. I said to a minister of the Gospel last Sabbath night at the close of the service: "Where are you preaching now?" "Oh!" he says: "I am not preaching. I am suffering from the physical effects of early sin. I can't preach now; I am sick." A consecrated man he now is, and he mourns bitterly over early sins; but that does not arrest their bodily effects. The simple fact is, that men and women often take twenty years of their life to build up influences that require all the rest of their life to break down. Talk about a man beginning life when he is twenty-one years of age; talk about a woman beginning life when she is eighteen years of age! Ah, no! In many respects that is the time they close life. In nine cases out of ten, all the questions of eternity are decided before that. Talk about a majority of men getting their fortunes between thirty and forty! They get or lose their fortunes between ten and twenty. When you tell me that a man is just beginning life, I tell you that he is just closing it. The next fifty years will not be of as much importance to him as the first twenty. Now, why do I say this? Is it for the annoyance of those who have only a baleful retrospection? You know that is not my way. I say it for the benefit of these young men and women. I want them to understand that eternity is wrapped up in this hour; that the sins of youth we never get over; that you are now fashioning the mould in which your great future is to run; that a minute, instead of being sixty seconds long, is made up of everlasting ages. You see what dignity and importance this gives to the life of all our young folks. Why, in the light of this subject, life is not something to be frittered away, not something to be smirked about, not something to be danced out, but something to be weighed in the balances of eternity. Oh, young man! the sin of last night, the sin of to-night, the sin of to-morrow

## WILL REACH OVER TEN THOUSAND YEARS—

aye, over the great and unending eternity. You may, after awhile, say: "I am very sorry. Now I have got to be thirty or forty years of age, and I do wish I had never committed those sins." What does that amount to? God may pardon you; but undo those things you never will, you never can.

In this same category of irrevocable mistakes I put *all parental neglect*. We begin the education of our children too late. By the time they get to be ten or fifteen we wake up to our mistakes and try to eradicate this bad habit of the child; but it is too late. That parent who omits in the first ten years of the child's life to make an eternal impression for Christ, never makes it. The child will probably go on with all the disadvantages which might have been avoided by parental faithfulness. Now you see what a mistake that father or mother makes who puts off to late life adherence to Christ. Here is a man who, at fifty years of age, says to you: "I must be a Christian;" and he yields his heart to God and sits in the house of prayer to-night a Christian. None of us can doubt it. He goes home and he says: "Here, at fifty years of age, I have given my heart to the Saviour. Now I must establish a family altar." What? Where are your children now? One in Boston, another in Cincinnati, another in New Orleans. And you, my brother, at your fiftieth year, going to establish your family altar. Very well; better late than ever; but alas! alas! that you did not do it twenty-five years ago.

When I was in Chamouni, Switzerland, I saw in the window of one of the shops a picture that impressed my mind very much. It was a picture of an accident that occurred on the side of one of the Swiss mountains. A company of travellers, with guides, went up some very steep places—places which but few travellers attempted to go up. They were, as all

travellers are there, fastened together with cords at the waist, so that if one slipped, the rope would hold him—the rope fastened to the others. Passing along the most dangerous point, one of the guides slipped, and they all slipped down the precipice; but after awhile, one more muscular than the rest struck his heels into the ice and stopped; but the rope broke, and down, hundreds and thousands of feet, the rest went. And so I see whole families bound together by ties of affection, and in many cases walking on slippery places of worldliness and sin. The father knows it and the mother knows it, and they are bound all together. After awhile they begin to slide down, steeper and steeper and the father becomes alarmed and he stops, planting his feet on the "Rock of Ages." He stops, but the rope breaks, and those who were tied fast to him by moral and spiritual influences once, go over the precipice. Oh! there is such a thing as coming to Christ soon enough to save ourselves, but not soon enough to save others. How many parents wake up in the latter part of life to find out the mistake! The parent says: "I have been too lenient," or, "I have been too severe in the discipline of my children. If I had the little ones around me again, how different I would do!" You will never have them around again. The work is done, the bent to the character is given, the eternity is decided. I say this to young parents—those who are twenty-five, or thirty, or thirty-five years of age. Have the family altar to-night. How do you suppose that father felt as he leaned over the couch of his dying child, and the expiring son said to him: "Father, you have been very good to me. You have given me a fine education, and you have placed me in a fine social position; you have done everything for me in a worldly sense; but, father, you never told me how to die. Now I am dying, and I am lost."

In this category of irrevocable mistakes I place also



## THE UNKINDNESS DONE TO THE DEPARTED.

When I was a boy, my mother used to say to me sometimes : "De Witt, you will be sorry for that when I am gone." And I remember just how she looked, sitting there, with cap and spectacles, and the old Bible in her lap ; and she never said a truer thing than that, for I have often been sorry since. While we have our friends with us, we say unguarded things that wound the feelings of those to whom we ought to give nothing but kindness. Perhaps the parent, without inquiring into the matter, boxes the child's ears. The little one who has fallen in the street comes in covered with dust, and as though the first disaster were not enough, she whips it. After awhile the child is taken, or the parent is taken, or the companion is taken, and those who are left say : "Oh if we could only get back those unkind words ; those unkind deeds. If we could only recall them ;" but you cannot get them back. You might bow down over the grave of that loved one, and cry, and cry, and cry. The white lips would make no answer. The stars shall be plucked out of their sockets, but these influences shall not be torn away. The world shall die, but there are some wrongs immortal. The moral of which is, take care of your friends while you have them, spare the scolding, be economical of the satire, shut up in a dark cave from which they shall never swarm forth all the words that have a sting in them. You will wish you had some day—very soon you will—perhaps to-morrow. Oh yes. While with a firm hand you administer parental discipline, also administer it very gently, lest some day there be a little slab in Greenwood, and on it chiselled "Our Willie," or "Our Charlie ;" and though you bow down prone to the grave, and seek a place of repentance, and seek it carefully with tears, you cannot find it.

There is another sin that I place in the class of irrevocable mistakes, and that is *lost opportunities of getting good*. I

never come to a Saturday night but I can see during that week that I have missed opportunities of getting good. I never come to my birthday but I can see that I have wasted many chances of getting better. I never go home on Sabbath from the discussion of a religious theme without feeling that I might have done it in a more successful way. How is it with you? If you take a certain number of bushels of wheat and scatter them over a certain number of acres of land, you expect a harvest in proportion to the amount of seed scattered. And I ask you to-night, have the sheaves of moral and spiritual harvest corresponded with the advantages given? How has it been with you? You may make resolutions for the future, but past opportunities are gone. In the long procession of future years all those past moments will march; but the archangel's trumpet that wakes the dead will not wake up for you one of those privileges. Esau has sold his birthright, and

## THERE IS NOT WEALTH ENOUGH

in the treasure-houses of heaven to buy it back again. What does that mean? It means that if you are going to get any advantage out of this Sabbath-day, you will have to get it before the hand wheels around on the clock to twelve to-night. It means that every moment of our life has two wings, and that it does not fly like a hawk, in circles, but in a straight line from eternity to eternity. It means that though other chariots may break down or drag heavily, this one never drops the brake, and never ceases to run. It means that while at other feasts the cup may be passed to us, and we may reject it, and yet after awhile take it, the cup-bearers to this feast never give us but one chance at the chalice, and rejecting that, we shall "find no place for repentance, though we seek it carefully with tears."

There is one more class of sins that I put in this category

of irrevocable offences, and that is *lost opportunities of usefulness*. There comes a time when you can do a good thing for Christ. It comes only once. Your business partner is a proud man. In ordinary circumstances say to him: "Believe in Christ," and he will say: "You mind your business and I'll mind mine." But there has been affliction in the household. His heart is tender. He is looking around for sympathy and solace. Now is your time. Speak, speak, or for ever hold your peace. There is a time in farm life when you plant the corn and when you sow the seed. Let that go by, and the farmer will wring his hands while other husbandmen are gathering in the sheaves. You are in a religious meeting, and there is an opportunity for you to speak out for God. You say: "I must do it." Your cheek flushes with embarrassment. You rise half way, but you cower before men, whose breath is in their nostrils, and you shrink back, and the opportunity is gone, and all eternity will feel the effect of your silence. Try to get back that opportunity! You cannot find it. You might as well try to find the fleece that Gideon watched, or take in your hand the dew that came down on the locks of the Bethlehem shepherds, or to find the plume of the first robin that went across Paradise. It is gone; it is gone for ever. When an opportunity for personal repentance or of doing good passes away, you may hunt for it, you cannot find it. You may fish for it, it will not take the hook. You may dig for it, you cannot bring it up. Remember what I tell you on this the second night in June, 1874, that there are wrongs and sins that can never be corrected; that our privileges fly not in circles, but in a straight line; that the lightnings have not as swift feet as our privileges when they are gone, and let an opportunity of salvation go by us an inch, the one hundredth part of an inch, the thousandth part of an inch, the millionth part of an inch, and no man can overtake it. Fire-

winged seraphim cannot come up with it. The eternal God Himself cannot catch it.

I stand before those who have a glorious birthright. Esau's was not so rich as yours. Sell it once and

YOU SELL IT FOR EVER.

The world wants to buy it. Satan wants to buy it. Listen for a moment to these brilliant offers, and it is gone.

Why do I tell you these truths? I have stood before you year after year telling you these things. Some have yielded their hearts to God, and a glorious crop of souls has been reaped; but this audience of immortal men and women, are they all prepared for the great future? I could stand here and play a sweeter harp. I could talk of the gates of pearl, and the walls of precious stones, and the crowns of light. What is the use of talking of those things to those who have no preparation for that land, and who are on the wrong road? And so I stand here Sabbath after Sabbath endeavouring to persuade you to give up your sin, and seek after God, and be at peace with Him.

I remember the story of the lad on the *Arctic* some years ago—the lad Stewart Holland. A vessel crashed into the *Arctic* in the time of a fog, and it was found that the ship must go down. Some of the passengers got off in the life-boats, some got off on rafts; but three hundred went to the bottom. During all those hours of calamity, Stewart Holland stood at the signal gun, and it sounded across the sea, boom! boom! The helmsman forsook his place, the engineer was gone, and some fainted, and some prayed, and some blasphemed, and the powder was gone, and they could no more let off the signal gun. The lad broke in the magazine, and brought out more powder, and again the gun boomed over the sea. Oh, my friends, I behold many of you in immortal peril. Sickness will come down after awhile upon

you, death will come upon you, judgment will come upon you, eternity will come upon you. Some, having taken the warning, have gone off in the life-boat, and they are safe; but others are not making any attempt to escape. So I stand at this signal gun of the Gospel, sounding the alarm, beware! beware! "Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation." The wrath to come! The wrath to come! Boom! Boom! Fly to the hope of the Gospel. Jesus waits. He stretches out His arms to all this auditory, and cries to-night with a tenderness I have never heard before: "Come unto me, all ye who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." That is what you want, sinful, tempted, bruised, and dying soul! May the Lord help you to accept the mercy, and the solace, and the salvation of the Gospel! Hear it, that your soul may live!

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### BARTERING FOR ETERNITY.

"Buy the truth, and sell it not."—*Prov. xxiii. 23.*

**C**HRIST never forgot the occupation of the people to whom He spake. His metaphors and illustrations were apt to be drawn from the every-day business of the people whom He addressed. Speaking to the fishermen, He said: "The Gospel is a net laid down into the sea." Addressing Himself to the farmers, He said: "A sower went forth to sow, and some of the seed fell on good ground, and some on thorny ground." That He might attract the attention of the shepherds, He tells the parable of the lost sheep, and how the shepherd went out in the wilderness to bring it home to the fold. In order that the plainest woman who ever mixed bread might not be in doubt as to what He meant, He said: "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, or

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yeast, which leavens the whole lump." Indeed, there were no learned allusions, there was no profound disquisition, there was no acute analysis in the addresses of Christ. They were merely a plain talk from a heart overflowing with love for the people, in a way that all the people understood. There is hardly a style of mind that is not susceptible to illustration. One Sabbath I was preaching on an Indian reservation to an audience of Indians. I was trying at that time to impress upon them the fact that childhood generally indicated the character of manhood. They did not seem to understand, until I told them, that *a crooked young tree makes a crooked old tree*, and then their eyes flashed with intelligence.

When my text says, "Buy the truth, and sell it not," it employs an illustration which ought to attract the attention of all those directly or indirectly engaged in merchandise. Would to God that we were all as wise in managing the matters of the soul as we are in worldly traffic. I want, this morning, to give some of the characteristics of a wise spiritual merchant.

In the first place, I remark that the wise spiritual merchant

#### WILL NOT NEGLECT TO TAKE AN ACCOUNT OF STOCK.

We are coming towards the first of January, and all our business men will be absorbed. They who ordinarily go over at eight or nine o'clock in the morning to business will go at seven, and if you happen to be in the street some night at eleven or twelve o'clock you will meet them, and if you ask "Why are you coming home so late?" they will say, "We are taking an account of stock." Every wise business man does that. Once a year all the goods must be handled, and every shelf must be ransacked, and the remnants must be unrolled, and the dusty bundles un-

wrapped, and everything in the store must be upturned. Once a year the business man wants to know how things stand. He reviews the books, writes them up, and draws out on a fair balance-sheet all his worldly circumstances: so many goods, so many liabilities; so much capital that is comparatively worthless, so much that can be easily turned into cash; so many debts, so many bills out that are perfectly good, so many that are doubtful. In other words, he looks over all the affairs of the year, and knows just what position he occupies. Now, my friends, ought we not to be just as scrutinising in the matters of the soul? The Rothschilds or the Stewarts never did a business of such infinite importance as that going on in the heart of every man and woman in this audience. There are the goods—the faculties and energies and passions of your soul, There are the liabilities to temptation, to danger, and death. Can it be that we have never taken an account of stock? Can it be that we have been running this tremendous business for eternity, and never drawn out our affairs on a balance-sheet? I know such a review is not pleasant. Neither does any merchant find it agreeable to take an account of stock. You all put the day off as long as you can. You do not know what it may reveal to you. You say, “There may come up something in review that I don’t want to know, and yet, after all, I must, as a business man, attend to it.” And though you put it off as long as you can, you after awhile say: “Boys, we’ll go and take an account of stock.” Many a man has been surprised at the close of that operation to find how poorly he was off. Ah! it is just as unpleasant to review our spiritual condition. The fact is we are insolvent. We owe debts we can never pay. We have been running this business of the soul so poorly, that we have got to be wound up. We can’t pay one cent on a dollar. We can’t answer for one of ten thousand



of our transgressions. There has never in worldly affairs been such a miserable failure in Wall-street or State-street as we have made in spiritual affairs.

WE OWE GOD EVERYTHING.

We have paid Him nothing ; some of us have never tried to pay Him anything.

But sometimes, when a man is thoroughly cornered in business matters, and he says : " I must stop payment," while he is sitting in his store or office thoroughly discouraged, there is a rap at the door. " Come in," he says. An old friend enters. He says : " I hear you are in great difficulty ; how much money will get you out of this embarrassment ? " " Well," you say, " five thousand dollars would." He says : " Here it is," bank—pay so and so. The man is delivered from all his commercial distresses. Just so, while we are sitting down disheartened on account of our sin, and feeling that there is no hope, there is a rap at the door of the heart ; it is Jesus coming in. He says : " What do you want ? " We answer : " We want pardon ; we want peace ; we want the eternal salvation of the Gospel." Jesus says : " There it is." The debts are paid, the obligations are cancelled. Now, we do business on an infinite capital. Now, we have on paper the name of the King. Now all the banks of eternity are ready with their loans. There is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus.

" The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,  
I will not, I will not desert to its foes ;  
That soul, though all hell should endeavour to shake,  
I'll never, no never, no never forsake."

I remark again, the wise spiritual merchant will be on his guard against burglars. How long it takes you to lock up your store at night. You put your valuables in the safe, you shut-to the door, you turn the lock, you try it after-



wards to be sure it is fastened, you bolt and rebolt your doors. You have a watchman, perhaps, at the store. You charge the police when they go up and down, once in a while to look in. In addition to that, perhaps, you have a burglar alarm, so that the opening of a window or door in the night, with a great rattle will wake up the watchman. Perhaps you have a watch-dog under the counter, who feels the responsibility of the store resting on his shaggy neck, his mouth down between his paws. If there be the least sound, he lifts one ear, he lifts his head, he rises up, and then lies down again with a growl, as much as to say: "I wish it had been somebody." Would to God that we were as wise in regard to spiritual burglaries. There are a thousand temptations around about our soul, ready to blow it up—ready to blast it; ready to push the bolt and steal the infinite and immortal treasure. The apostle says: "What I say unto one, I say unto all—watch." That is, look out for burglars. Here comes a thief stealing our Christian belief, and it is very easy to lose it, but it is not so easy to get it back again. Let it once be gone, and all the detectives of earth cannot fetch it back. Alas for the man who, once believing in Christianity, now rejects it! He tries to be satisfied; but the most doleful thing on earth is a religion without Jesus Christ in it. If there are any spies at the door of your heart, if any of those burglars are trying to break in the windows of your soul, you had better fly at them with infinite vehemence, and ask the Lord God to help you in the arrest.

Here is another trying to break in and steal your patience. It puts something explosive in your temper and tries to blow it up. Here you have a casket of diamonds, made of days and hours and months of precious time. Oh, how many burglars there are around trying to steal those diamonds. Temptations to pride, temptations to self-indul-

gence, temptations to neglect the great things of eternity, make up a gang of desperadoes that have broken out of the jail of hell, and are prowling around our soul trying to steal this treasure, and, in the name of God, I bid you arm against them. They have taken many of the spoils already, and I cry: "*Stop thief!*"

"My soul, be on thy guard,  
Ten thousand foes arise,  
And hosts of sin are pressing hard  
To draw thee from the skies.  
Ne'er think the victory won,  
Nor once at ease sit down.  
Thine arduous work will not be done  
Till thou hast got thy crown."

I remark, again, that the wise spiritual merchant will *watch the state of the markets*. When the business man takes up the paper in the morning, he does not first look at the marriages and deaths, or the editorials. He looks at the price current. Before ten o'clock, merchants all know whether gold has gone up or down, whether the goods they have on the shelf have increased or decreased in value. A man might say: "It is nothing to me how others do business, or what prices others get, I shall go straight on without any reference to anybody else in business." You know that would be the precursor of bankruptcy. He watches the markets; he cannot afford to be indifferent. Now, I say, we ought to be just as alert in looking at the spiritual markets. We ought to know whether the cause of God in the earth is going up or down. No man can be independent of the general state of morals and of religion in a community. For this reason, every intelligent Christian will be examining the churches, the schools, and the benevolent organizations. The failure of a crop in Russia, or of a bank in London, or the breaking out of a war in India, affects prices in the New York market, and the conversion of one soul in

Central Africa ought to leave its impression on every intelligent Christian in Brooklyn. It is my business this morning to proclaim to you the state of the spiritual markets, and I tell you the cause of God is advancing. The people are buying the truth, and are not so disposed to sell it as they used to be. The ships of Tarshish are coming into the harbour of God, and the gold, and frankincense, and myrrh, are showering down at the feet of Jesus. The religion of the Lord Jesus Christ is rising. The nations are bidding for this Gospel, and the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver.

If this religion of Christ is advancing in value, and must continue advancing, your business judgment will tell you the larger the investment you make in it the better. Other values may have depressions, but these Gospel values

ALWAYS WILL BE ON THE ADVANCE.

Sometimes the government comes on the marts of business and upsets the planning of the gold gamblers, and vindicates justice and the rights of the people, and the Lord God Almighty is the mightiest of financiers, and He will scatter to the four winds of heaven all the plotters of iniquity, and he will vindicate his government, and make His own children the princes of eternity.

Oh, these spiritual values—men do not know how to estimate them. You give a dollar to a Christian object and say: "That's gone, I'll never hear of that again." You give twenty-five dollars to worldly gratification, and you think you have made a good investment. Have you? Of the twenty-five dollars you gave to the worldly gratification you will hear nothing; but that one dollar has been an investment that will go on accumulating interest, and adding compound interest, until it will take the mightiest intelligence of heaven to estimate what is the value of



that dollar rolling on through all eternity until the banking houses of heaven cannot hold the accumulation. We cannot understand now God's way of estimating things. The woman who sells in her thread and needle store one thousand dollars' worth a year, cannot estimate the plans of a man who sells two millions of dollars' worth of goods a year. God's projects are too vast for us. We talk of one man buying a railroad, or of another buying half a city; why the Lord Jesus Christ bought the whole earth and paid for it in one day—paid for it in tears and agony and blood! You talk about vast corporations, and moneyed institutions, and powerful companies; but the richest company in all the universe is the company of Christ's disciples, and the poorest one of them will be a millionaire to all eternity. I take one of these bonds of the company, and I tear off just one coupon, and hand it to you, and you read on that coupon these words: "*All are yours.*" If a man wants a better dividend than that, I do not know where he will get it.

Again, I remark that the wise spiritual merchant is *careful to get a profit out of everything that passes through his hands*. You go into the store. You see the roll of nankeen, or the barrel of sugar, or the string of bananas, or the coil of ship cable. Before the merchant lets them pass out of his hands, he will make a profit out of them. If he has paid ten cents a yard for something, he will get twelve or fifteen; if he has paid twenty-five cents for a pound, he will get thirty. Now, I say

#### THE WISE SPIRITUAL MERCHANT

will get a spiritual advantage out of everything that comes across him—from all sorrows, all perplexities, all vexations. He will take these harrows and furnaces of trouble, and from them get an everlasting profit. Affliction has failed of its

object if it does not leave a soul worth more than when it came. It is very interesting to get into confidential conversation with a man who has gained a large property, and to have him tell you just how he made his money ; but it is more interesting to get into the confidence of an old Christian, and have him tell you just how he accumulated his wealth of Christian character. He will say : " My property went down in 1857, but I came out of that trouble with infinite resources of spiritual comfort and strength." He will say : " I was sick for three months and could not do a stroke of work ; and when I came forth I was as weak as a child, and staggered along the street ; but oh, my soul had the strength of a giant." And he will tell you of the dark day that came in his household when a loved one was carried out, and he felt that everything was gone with it ; and on his way back from the cemetery Jesus met him and said : " Weep not, I will make up for thy loss ; I will more than make up for it. Why, those little feet are already bounding along the corridors of heaven. That hand is already sweeping the harp-strings of glory." Jesus took that afflicted father to the verge of the grave and bid him look down into it, and instead of a grave it became a chest of immortal brilliants ; and as he run his hand up and down the gate of the sepulchre he found it hard, cold, rusty iron ; but Jesus touched it and it became solid pearl—bars of pearl—bolts of pearl, hinges of pearl, and lo ! it was the gate of heaven. " All things work together for good to those who love God ;" and I pray the Lord Almighty that whatever misfortune, whatever vexation, whatever trial, whatever bereavements pass through our soul, we may reap from them a spiritual tariff that will make us richer while we live on earth, and glad through all eternity.

I remark again, that the wise spiritual merchant will not take any *unnecessary risks*. Before the ship goes out of the

harbour, application is made to the marine insurance company; the Board of Underwriters say it is all right, the insurance papers are signed and delivered; it is the only safe way to do. Twelve hours after the ship gets beyond the Hook, it might perish, and the whole thing might be a total loss. A man will not take such a risk for himself. You have your store insured; you have your stock of goods insured. If the insurance runs out on Saturday, you do not wait until Monday to renew it. You say, on Sunday the whole thing may perish in a conflagration. You cannot afford to take the risk. Somebody shows you an operation by which you might make, perhaps, five thousand dollars; but you say: "Perhaps I might not. Perhaps I might lose that and ruin my credit. I can't take the risk." So you do not enter into the enterprise. Oh, that we were as wise in taking spiritual risks. We will, after a while, founder on the sea of death.

#### WHAT IS THE AMOUNT OF OUR POLICY?

How will we come out of that disaster? Suppose a man says: "I am not ready now for eternity, but I mean to be." Let us calculate the risk; not as a minister talks to the people, but as one business man talks to another; let us calculate the risk that man runs. The lungs may congest; the brain may be fevered; the foot may slip; a brick may fall from the workman's hod; ferry boats may collide; a frightened horse may dash over him; a pistol may go off accidentally; poisoned air may be breathed; the reason may topple; the heart may stop. The man who stays away from Jesus Christ, and makes no preparation for eternity, runs ten thousand risks, infinite risks, every day of his life. After Lord Byron died, they cut his heart out, and put it in a beautiful case; and some people, who were infatuated with the man, thought that there was in that heart in the

case some wonderful charm ; and the Greeks carried it out into battle, and it was lost—lost in the swamps, and never heard of. It was considered an ominous and a terrible loss. But, my friends, it was only a dead heart. What was that compared with the loss of a *living, immortal soul* ? Christ saw that soul from eternity, and travelling in the greatness of His strength across all the ages, He comes to save it, and stands this morning in its presence. Will you let Him save it ? Oh, this soul that you have beating within your breast—this soul of tremendous faculties, a soul that can soar higher than angel's wing ever flew, or sink deeper than devil's foot ever plunged—a soul that will soon weigh anchor for a ceaseless voyage—a soul for which all the armies of light with drawn swords, and all the battalions of the darkness, with the artillery of death, are contending ; and while the battle rages there are songs and curses, opening of gates of light, and slamming-to of prison doors. Oh, my God, have I such a soul ? How shall I defend it ? How shall I hide it ? In what cave of the mountain shall I secrete it ? Rather than surrender that soul, I must pass the stream ; I must go through the fire ; I must climb the rocks ; I must station myself in some defile of the mountain, and, with immortal courage and persistence, fight against those influences that would capture my soul and destroy it.

Blessed be God, in Jesus Christ the soul is safe. There is no risk for that soul that is in Christ's keeping. All other banks may fail, all other securities may prove worthless, but the greater the rush upon this Bank, the wider the doors will open. As earthly gold depreciates, this treasure will rise in value. After all earthly shares have failed, heaven will declare its large dividend. Long after the last stock exchange of earth has been disbanded, "the foundation of the Lord standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are His." If you have made these spiritual investments,

I congratulate you. They will increase in value while you live; they will be worth more in eternity than they are now. I bid you be of good cheer. Look out that none of your treasures are stolen. Are there some here who have never bought the truth? or, after buying it, have you sold it? Let me say you are not wise. The Indian who sells a thousand acres of land for one poor string of beads, makes a better bargain than that man who wins the world but loses his soul.

James Montgomery solemnly asks :

“What is the thing of greatest price  
The whole creation round?  
That which was lost in Paradise,  
That which in Christ is found.”

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## THE LAST ACT OF THE TRAGEDY.

“And the people stood beholding.”—*Luke xxiii. 35.*

**T**HERE is nothing more wild and ungovernable than a mob. Some of the older people in the audience may remember the excitement in New York during the riot when the people went howling through the streets at the time Macready stood on the stage of the Astor-place opera-house. Those of you who have read history may remember the excitement in Paris during the time of Louis XVI., and how the mob rushed up and down frantically. To this day you may see the marks of the bullets that struck the palace as the Swiss guards stood defending it. There is a wild mob going through the streets of Jerusalem. As it passes along it is augmented by the multitudes that come out from the lanes and the alleys to join the shout, and the laughter, and the lamentation of the rioters, who become more and more ungovernable as they get towards the gates of the city.



Fishermen, hirelings of the high priests, merchant princes, beggars, mingle in that crowd. They are passing out now through the gates of the city. They come to a hill white with the bleached skulls of victims—a hill that was itself the shape of a skull, covered with skulls, and called Golgotha, which means the place of a skull. Three men are to be put to death—two for theft, one for treason, having claimed to be king of the Jews. Each one carries his own cross, but one of them is so exhausted from previous hardship that He faints under the burden, and they compel Simon of Cyrene, who is supposed to be in sympathy with the condemned man, to take hold of one end of the cross and help Him to carry it. They reach the hill. The three men are lifted in horrid crucifixion. While the mob are howling, and mocking, and hurling scorn at the chief object of their hate, the darkness hovers, and scowls, and swoops upon the scene, and the rocks rend with terrific clang, and choking wind, and moaning cavern, and dropping sky, and shuddering earthquake declare, in whisper, in groan, in shriek: "*This is the Son of God.*"

I propose to speak of the two groups of spectators around the cross—the *friendly* and the *unfriendly*. In the unfriendly group were the Roman soldiers. Now it is a grand thing to serve one's country. There is not an Englishman's heart but thrills at the name of Havelock, brave for Christ and brave for the British Government. When there was a difficult point to take, the officers would say: "Bring out the saints of old Havelock." I think, if Paul had gone into military service, he would have eclipsed the heroism of the Cæsars, and the Alexanders, and the Napoleons of the world by his bravery and enthusiasm. There is a time to be at peace, and there is a time when a Christian has to fight. I do not know of a graver or braver thing than for a young man, when it is demanded of him, to turn his back upon

home, and quiet, and luxury, and, in the service of his country, go forth to camp, and field, and carnage, and martyrdom. It was no mean thing to be a Roman soldier: it was no idle thing. You know what revolutions dashed up against the walls of that empire. You know to what conquest she devoted herself, flinging her war-eagles against the proudest ensigns. But the noblest army has in it sneaks, and these were the men who were detailed from that army to attend to the execution of Christ. Their dastardly behaviour puts out the gleam of their spears, and covers their banner with obloquy. They were cowards. They were ruffians. They were gamblers. No noble soldier would treat a fallen foe as they treated the captured Christ. Generally there is respect paid to the garments of the departed. It may be only a hat, or a coat, or a shoe, but it goes down in the family wardrobe from generation to generation. Now that Christ is to be disrobed, who shall have His coat? Joseph of Arimathea would have liked to have had it. Mary, the mother of Jesus, would have liked to have had it. How fondly she would have hovered over it, and when she must leave it, with what tenderness she would have bequeathed it to her best friend. It was

#### THE ONLY COVERING OF CHRIST

in darkness and storm. That was the very coat that the woman touched when from it there went out virtue for her healing. That was the only wedding garment he had in the marriage of Cana, and the storms that swept Galilee had drenched it again and again. And what did they do with it? They raffled for it. We have heard of men who gambled away their own garments, who gambled away their children's shoes, who gambled away the family Bible, who gambled away their wife's last dress; but it adds to the ghastliness of a Saviour's humiliation and the horror of crime,

when I hear Jesus in His last moments declaring: "They parted my garments among them, and for my vesture did they cast lots."

In this unfriendly group around the cross also were *the rulers, and the scribes, and the chief priests*. Lawyers, and judges, and ministers of religion in this day are expected to have some respect for their office. In this land, where the honours of the judiciary sometimes come to besotted politicians and men noted for drunkenness—even in this land, where we live, it is an unheard-of thing that a judge comes down from the bench and strikes a prisoner in the face. No minister of religion would scoff at or mock a condemned criminal. And yet the great men of that land seemed to be equal to any ruffianism. They were vying with each other as to how much scorn and Billingsgate they could cast into the teeth of the dying Christ. Why, the worst felon, when his enemy has fallen, refuses to strike him. But these men were not ashamed to strike Jesus when He was down. So it has been in all ages of the world that there have been men in high positions who despised Christ and His Gospel. What Popes have issued their anathemas! What judgment-seats have kindled their fires! What inquisitions have sharpened their sword! "Not this man, but Barabbas: now Barabbas was a robber." Against the Christian religion have been brought the historical genius of Gibbon, and the polish of Shaftesbury, and the kingly authority of Frederick of Prussia, and the brilliancy of John, Earl of Rochester, and the stupendous intellect of Voltaire. Innumerable pens have stabbed it, and innumerable books have cursed it, and that mob that hounded Christ from Jerusalem to "the place of a skull" has never been dispersed, but is augmenting yet, as many of the learned men of the world, and great men of the world, come out from their studies, and their laboratories, and their palaces, and cry:



"Away with this man! away with Him!" The most bitter hostility which many of the learned men of this day exercise in any direction they exercise against Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, without whom we will die for ever.

In this group of enemies surrounding the cross, in this unfriendly group, I also find *the railing thief*. It seems that he twisted himself on the spikes; he forgot his own pain in his complete antipathy to Jesus. I do not know what kind of a thief he was. I do not know whether he had been a burglar, or a pickpocket, or a highwayman; but our idea of his crimes is aggravated when we hear him blaspheming the Redeemer. Oh, shame indescribable! Oh, ignominy unsupportable! Hissed at by a thief! In that ridicule I find the fact that there is a hostility between sin and holiness. There cannot be, there never has been, any sympathy between honesty and theft, between purity and lasciviousness, between zeal and indolence, between faith and unbelief, between light and darkness, between heaven and hell. And when I see a good man going out to discharge his duty, and he is enthusiastic for Christ, and I see persecution after him, and scorn after him, and contempt after him, I say: "Hark! another hiss of the dying thief!" And when I see Holiness going forth in her white robes, and Charity, with great heart and open hand, to take care of the sick, and help the needy, and restore the lost, and I find her lashed with hyper-criticism, and jostled of the world, and pursued from point to point, and caricatured with low witticisms, I say: "Aha! another hiss of the dying thief!" It is a sad thing to know that this malefactor died just as he had lived. People nearly always do. Have you never remarked that? There is but one instance mentioned in all the Bible of a man repenting in the last hour. All the other men who lived lives of iniquity, as far as we can understand from the Bible, died deaths

of iniquity. If you live a drunkard's life, you will die a drunkard; the defrauder dies a defrauder; the idler dies an idler; the blasphemer dies a blasphemer; the slanderer dies a slanderer; the debauchee dies a debauchee. As you live you will die, in all probability. Do not, therefore, make your soul believe that you can go on in a course of sin, and then in the last moment repent. There is such a thing as death-bed repentance, but I never saw one—I never saw one. God in all this Bible presents us only one case of that kind, and it is not safe to risk it, lest our case should happen not to be the one amid ten thousand.

“Repent! the voice celestial cries,  
No longer dare delay;  
The wretch that scorns the mandate dies,  
And meets the fiery day.”

But there were rays of light that streamed into the crucifixion. As Christ was on the cross and looked down on the crowd of people, He saw some very warm friends there. And that brings me to the remarking upon the friendly group that were around the cross. And the first in all that crowd was His mother. You need not point her out to me. I can see by the sorrow, the anguish, the woe, by the up-thrown hands! That all means mother! “Oh,” you say: “why didn’t she go down to the foot of the hill and sit with her back to the scene? It was too horrible for her to look upon.” Do you not know when a child is in anguish or trouble, it always makes a heroine of a mother? Take her away, you say, from the cross. You cannot drag her away. She will keep on looking; as long her son breathes she will stand there looking. Oh what a scene it was for a tender-hearted mother to look upon. How gladly she would have sprung to His relief. It was her son. Her son! How gladly she would have clambered up on the cross and hung there herself if her son could have been relieved. How

strengthening she would have been to Christ if she might have come close by Him and soothed Him. Oh, there was a good deal in what the little sick child said, upon whom a surgical operation of a painful nature must be performed. The doctor said: "That child wont live through this operation unless you encourage him. You go in and get his consent." The father told him all the doctor said, and added: "Now, John, will you go through with it? Will you consent to it?" He looked very pale, and he thought a minute, and said: "Yes, father, if you will hold my hand I will!" So the father held his hand and led him straight through the peril. Oh woman, in your hour of anguish, who do you want with you? Mother. Young man, in your hour of trouble, who do you want to console you? Mother. If the mother of Jesus could have only taken those bleeding feet into her lap! If she might have taken the dying head on her bosom! If she might have said to Him: "It will soon be over, Jesus—it will soon be over, and we will meet again, and it will be all well." But no, she dared not come up so close. They would have struck her back with their hammers. They would have kicked her down the hill.

#### THERE CAN BE NO ALLEVIATION

at all. Jesus *must* suffer and Mary *must* look. I suppose she thought of the birth-hour in Bethlehem. I suppose she thought of that time when with her boy in her bosom she hastened on in the darkness in the flight towards Egypt. I suppose she thought of His boyhood when He was the joy of her heart. I suppose she thought of the thousand kindnesses He had done her, not forsaking her or forgetting her even in His last moments; but turning to John and saying: "There is mother; take her with you. She is old now. She cannot help herself. Do for her just as I would have done for her if I had lived. Be very tender and gentle with

her. Behold thy mother!" She thought it all over; and there is no memory like a mother's memory, and there is no woe like a mother's woe.

There was another friend in that group, and that was Simon the Cyrenian. He was a stranger in the land, but had been long enough to show his favoritism for Christ. I suppose he was one of those men who never can see anybody imposed upon but he wants to help him. "Well, Simon," they cried out, "you are such a friend to Jesus, help Him to carry the cross. You see Him fainting under it." So he did. A scene for all the ages of time and all the cycles of eternity; a cross with Jesus at the one end of it and Simon at the other, suggesting the idea to you, oh troubled soul, that no one need ever carry a whole cross. You have only half a cross to carry. If you are in poverty, Jesus was poor, and He comes and takes the other end of the cross. If you are in persecution, Jesus was persecuted, and He comes and takes the other end of the cross. If you are in any kind of trouble, you have a sympathising Redeemer. Oh how the truth flashed upon my soul this morning. Jesus at one end of the cross and the soul at the other end of the cross; and when I see Christ and Simon going up the hill together, I say we ought to help each other to carry our burdens. "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." If you find a man in persecution, or sickness, or in business trouble, go right to him and say: "My brother, I have come to help you. You take hold of one end of this cross and I will take hold of the other end of the cross, and Jesus Christ will come in and take hold of the middle of the cross; and after awhile there will be no cross at all."

"Shall Jesus bear the cross alone,  
And all the world go free?  
No, there's a cross for every one,  
And there's a cross for me."

But there was another marked personage in that friendly group. That was the penitent malefactor. He was a thief, or had been; no disguising that fact. All his crimes came upon him with relentless conviction. What was he to do? "Oh," he says, "what shall I do with my sins upon me?" and he looks around and sees Jesus, and sees compassion in His face, and he says: "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom." What did Jesus do? Did He turn and say: "You thief! I have seen all your crimes, and you have jeered and scoffed at me, now die for ever?" Did He say that? Oh no; Jesus could not say that. He says: "This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise." I sing the song of mercy for the chief of sinners. Murderers have come and plunged their red hands in this fountain, and they have been made as white as snow. The prodigal that was off for twenty years has come back and sat at his father's table. The ship that has been tossed in a thousand storms floats into this harbour. The parched and sunstruck soul comes under the shadow of this rock. Tens of thousands who were as bad as you and I have been, have put down their burdens and their sins at the feet of this blessed Jesus.

"The dying thief rejoiced to see  
That fountain in his day;  
And there may I, as vile as he,  
Wash all my sins away."

But there was another friendly group. I do not know their names; we are not told: but we are simply told there were many around the cross who sympathised with the dying sufferer. Oh the wail of woe that went through that crowd when they saw Jesus die. You know the Bible says if all the things Jesus did were recorded the world would not contain the books that would be written. It implies that what we have in the Bible are merely specimens of the Saviour's mercy. We are told that one blind man got his eyesight. I



suppose He cured twenty that we are not told of. When He cured the one leper whose story is recorded, He might have cured twenty lepers. Where He did one act of kindness mentioned, He must have done a thousand we do not know about. I see those who received kindnesses from Him standing beneath the cross, and one says: "Why, that is the Jesus that bound up my broken heart." And another standing beneath the cross says: "That is the Jesus that restored my daughter to life." Another looks up and says: "Why that is Jesus who gave me my eyesight." And another looks up and says: "That is the Jesus who lifted me up when I was sick; oh, I can't bear to see Him die." Every pelt of the hammer drove a spike through their hearts. Every groan of Christ opens a new fountain of sorrow. They had better get on with that crucifixion quickly or it will never take place. These disciples will seize Christ and snatch Him from the grasp of those bad men, and take those ringleaders of the persecution and put them up in the very place. Be quick with those nails. Be quick with that gall. Be quick with those spikes, for I see in the sorrow and the wrath of those disciples a storm brewing that will burst on the heads of those persecutors.

To-day we come and we join the friendly crowd.

WHO WANTS TO BE ON THE WRONG SIDE?

I cannot bear to be in the unfriendly group. There is not a man or a woman in this house who wants to be in the unfriendly group. I want to join the other group. We come while they are bewailing, and join their lamentations. We see that brow bruised; we hear that dying groan; and, while the priests scoff, and the devils rave, and the lightnings of God's wrath are twisted into a wreath for that bloody mount, you and I will join the cry, the supplication, of the penitent

malefactor: "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom." Oh, the pain, the ignominy, the ghastliness, the agony; and yet the joy, the thrilling, bounding, glorious hope! *Son of Mary! Son of God!*

Is there one here who will reject this atonement made for the people; not for one man here and one man there, but for all who will accept it?

There was a very touching scene among an Indian tribe in the last century. It seemed that one of the chieftains had slain a man belonging to an opposite tribe, and that tribe came up and said: "We will exterminate you unless you surrender the man who committed that crime." The chieftain who did the crime stepped out from the ranks, and said: "I am not afraid to die, but I have a wife and four children, and I have a father aged, and a mother aged, whom I support by hunting, and I sorrow to leave them helpless." Just as he said that, his old father from behind stepped out, and said: "He shall not die. I take his place. I am old and well stricken in years. I can do no good. I might as well die. My days are almost over. He cannot be spared. Take me." And they accepted the sacrifice. Wonderful sacrifice, you say; but not so wonderful as that found in the Gospel; for we deserved to die, aye, we were sentenced, when Christ, not worn out with years, but in the flush of His youth, said: "Save that man from going down to the pit; I am the ransom! Put his burdens on My shoulders. Let His stripes fall on My back. Take My heart for his heart. Let Me die, that he may live." Shall it be told to-day in heaven that, notwithstanding all those wounds, and all that blood, and all those tears, and all that agony, you would not accept him?

"Well might the sun in darkness hide  
And shut his glories in,  
When Christ, the mighty maker, died  
For man, the creature's, sin.

Thus might I hide my blushing face  
 While His dear cross appears,  
 Dissolve my heart in thankfulness  
 And melt my eyes in tears.

But drops of grief can ne'er repay  
 The debt of love I owe;

Here, Lord, I give myself away,  
 'Tis all that I can do."

Oh, Lord Jesus, we accept Thee. We all accept Thee now. There is no hand in all this great audience lifted to smite Thee on the cheek now. No one will spear Thee now. No one will strike Thee now. Come in, Lord Jesus! Come quickly.

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### THE STORMING OF THE TEMPLE OF BERITH.

"And Abimelech gat him up to Mount Zalmon, he and all the people that were with him; and Abimelech took an ax in his hand, and cut down a bough from the trees, and took it, and laid it on his shoulder, and said unto the people that were with him: What ye have seen me do, make haste, and do as I have done. And all the people likewise cut down every man his bough, and followed Abimelech, and put them to the hold, and set the hold on fire upon them; so that all the men of the tower of Shechem died."—*Judges ix. 48, 49.*

**A** BIMELECH is a name malodorous in Bible history, and yet full of profitable suggestion. Buoys are black and uncomely, but they tell where the rocks are. The snake's rattle is hideous, but it gives timely warning. From the piazza of my summer home, night by night, I saw a lighthouse fifteen miles away, not placed there for adornment, but to tell mariners to stand off from that dangerous point. So all the iron-bound coast of moral danger is marked with Saul, and Herod, and Rehoboam, and Jezebel, and Abimelech. These bad people are mentioned in the Bible not only as warnings, but because there were sometimes flashes of good conduct in their lives worthy of imi-

tation. God sometimes drives a very straight nail with a very poor hammer.

The city of Shechem had to be taken, and Abimelech and his men were to do it. I see the dust rolling up from their excited march. I hear the shouting of the captains and the yell of the besiegers. The swords clack sharply on the parrying shields, and the vociferation of two armies in death grapple is horrible to hear. The battle goes on all day; and as the sun is setting Abimelech and his army cry: "Surrender!" to the beaten foe. And unable longer to resist, the city of Shechem falls; and there are pools of blood, and dissevered limbs, and glazed eyes looking up beggingly for mercy that war never shows, and dying soldiers with their head on the lap of mother, or wife, or sister, who have come out for the last offices of kindness and affection; and a groan rolls across the city, stopping not, because there is no spot for it to rest, so full is the place of other groans. A city wounded! A city dying! A city dead! Wail for Shechem all ye who know the horrors of a sacked town!

As I look over the city, I can find only one building standing, and that is the temple of the god Berith. Some soldiers outside of the city in a tower, finding that they can no longer defend Shechem, now begin to look out for their own personal safety, and they fly to this temple of Berith. They get within the door, shut it, and they say: "Now, we are safe. Abimelech has taken the whole city, but he cannot take this temple of Berith. Here we shall be under the protection of the gods." Oh, Berith, the god! do your best now for these refugees. If you have eyes, pity them. If you have hands, help them. If you have thunderbolts, strike for them. But how shall Abimelech and his army take this temple of Berith and the men who are there fortified? Will they do it with sword? Nay. Will they do it with spear? Nay. With battering ram, rolled up by hundred-armed

strength, crashing against the walls? Nay. Abimelech marches his men to a wood in Zalmon. With his axe he hews off a limb of a tree, and puts that limb upon his own shoulder, and then he says to his men: "You do the same." They are obedient to their commander. There is a struggle as to who shall have axes. The whole wood is

FULL OF BENDING BOUGHS,

and the crackling, and the hacking, and the cutting, until every one of the host has a limb of a tree cut down, and not only that, but has put it upon his shoulder just as Abimelech showed him how. Are these men now all armed with the tree branch? The reply comes: "All armed." And they march on. Oh, what a strange army, with what strange equipment. They come up to the foot of the temple of Berith, and Abimelech takes his limb of a tree and throws it down; and the first platoon of soldiers come up and they throw down their branches; and the second platoon, and the third, until all around about the temple of Berith there is a pile of tree branches. The Shechemites look out from the window of the temple upon what seems to them childish play on the part of their enemies. But soon the flints are struck, and the spark begins to kindle the brush, and the flame comes up all through the pile, and the red elements leap to the casement, and the woodwork begins to blaze, and one arm of flame is thrown up on the right side of the temple, and another arm of flame is thrown up on the left side of the temple, until they clasp their lurid palms under the wild night sky, and the cry of "Fire!" within, and "Fire!" without, announces the terror, and the strangulation, and the doom of the Shechemites, and the complete overthrow of the temple of the god Berith. Then there went up a shout, long and loud, from the stout lungs and swarthy chests of Abimelech and his men, as they stood amid the ashes and

the dust crying: "Victory! Victory!" Or, as the text has it: "And Abimelech gat him up to Mount Zalmon, he and all the people that were with him; and Abimelech took an ax in his hand, and cut down a bough from the trees, and took it, and laid it on his shoulder, and said unto the people that were with him: What ye have seen me do, make haste, and do as I have done. And all the people likewise cut down every man his bough, and followed Abimelech, and put them to the hold, and set the hold on fire upon them; so that all the men of the tower of Shechem died."

Now I learn first from this subject, *the folly of depending upon any one form of tactics in anything we have to do for this world or for God.* Look over the weaponry of olden times—javelins, battle-axes, harbegeons, and show me a single weapon with which Abimelech and his men could have gained such complete triumph. It is no easy thing to take a temple thus armed. I saw a house yesterday where, during revolutionary times, a man and his wife kept back a whole regiment hour after hour, because they were inside the house, and the assaulting soldiers were outside the house. Yet here Abimelech and his army come up, they surround this temple, and they capture it without the loss of a single man on the part of Abimelech, although I suppose some of the old Israelitish heroes told Abimelech: "You are only going up there to be cut to pieces." Yet you are willing to testify to-day that by no other mode—certainly not by ordinary modes—could that temple so easily, so thoroughly, have been taken. Fathers and mothers, brethren and sisters, in Jesus Christ, what the Church most wants to learn, this day, is that any plan is right, is lawful, is best, which helps to overthrow the temple of sin, and capture this world for God. We are very apt to stick to the old modes of attack. We put on the old-style coat of mail. We come up with the sharp, keen, glittering steel spear of argument, expecting in

that way to take the castle ; but they have a thousand spears where we have ten. And so the castle of sin stands. Oh, my friends we will

NEVER CAPTURE THIS WORLD

for God by any keen sabre of sarcasm, by any glittering lances of rhetoric, by any sapping and mining of profound disquisition, by any gunpowdery explosions of indignation, by sharp shootings of wit, by howitzers of mental strength made to swing shell five miles, by cavalry horses gorgeously caparisoned pawing the air. In vain all the attempts on the part of these ecclesiastical foot soldiers, light horsemen, and grenadiers.

My friends, I propose, this morning, a different style of tactics. Let each one go to the forest of God's promise and invitation, and hew down a branch, and put it on his shoulder, and let us all come around these obstinate iniquities, and then, with this pile, kindled by the fires of a holy zeal and the flames of a consecrated life, we will burn them out. What steel cannot do, fire may. And I, this morning, announce myself in favour of any plan of religious attack that succeeds—any plan of religious attack, however radical, however odd, however unpopular, however hostile to all the conventionalities of Church and State. If one style of prayer does not do the work, let us try another style. If the Church music of to-day does not get the victory, then let us make the assault with a backwoods chorus. If a prayer-meeting at half-past seven in the evening does not succeed, let us have one as early in the morning as when the angel found wrestling Jacob too much for him. If a sermon with the three authorised heads does not do the work, then let us have a sermon with twenty heads, or no head at all. We want more heart in our song, more heart in our alms-giving, more heart in our prayers, more heart in

our preaching. Oh for less of Abimelech's sword and more of Abimelech's conflagration ! I had often heard

"There is a fountain filled with blood "

sung artistically by four birds perched on their Sunday roost in the gallery, until I thought of Jenny Lind, and Nillson, and Sontag, and all the other warblers ; but there came not one tear to my eye, nor one master emotion to my heart. But one night I went down to the African Methodist meeting-house in Philadelphia, and at the close of the service a black woman, in the midst of the audience, began to sing that hymn, and all the audience joined in, and we were floated some three or four miles nearer heaven than I have ever been since. I saw with my own eyes that "fountain filled with blood,"—red, agonizing, sacrificial, redemptive, and I heard the crimson splash of the wave as we all went down under it.

"For sinners plunged beneath that flood  
Lose all their guilty stains."

Oh, my friends, the Gospel is not a syllogism ; it is not casuistry, it is not polemics, or the science of squabble. It is blood-red fact ; it is warm-hearted invitation ; it is leaping, bounding, flying good news ; it is efflorescent with all light ; it is rufescent with all summery glow ; it is arborescent with all sweet shade. I have seen the sun rise on Mount Washington, and from the Tip-top House ; but there was no beauty in that compared with the day-spring from on high when Christ gives light to a soul. I have heard Parepa sing : but there was no music in that compared with the voice of Christ when He said : "Thy sins are forgiven thee ; go in peace." Good news ! Let every one

#### CUT DOWN A BRANCH

of this tree of life and wave it. Let him throw it down and kindle it. Let all the way from Mount Zalmon to Shechem



be filled with the tossing joy. Good news! This bonfire of the Gospel shall consume the last temple of sin, and will illumine the sky with apocalyptic joy, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Any new plan that makes a man quit his sin, and that prostrates a wrong, I am as much in favour of as though all the doctors, and the bishops, and the archbishops, and the synods, and the academical gownsmen of Christianity sanctioned it. The temple of Berith must come down, and I do not care how it comes.

Still further, I learn from this subject *the power of example*. If Abimelech had sat down on the grass, and told his men to go and get the boughs, and go out to the battle, they would never have gone at all, or if they had, it would have been without any spirit or effective result; but when Abimelech goes with his own axe and hews down a branch, and with Abimelech's arm puts it on Abimelech's shoulder, and marches on, then, my text says, all the people did the same. How natural that was. What made Garibaldi and Stonewall Jackson the most magnetic commanders of this century? They always rode ahead. Oh, the overcoming power of example. Here is a father on the wrong road: all his boys go on the wrong road. Here is a father who enlists for Christ: his children enlist. I saw in some of the picture galleries of Europe, that before many of the great works of the masters—the old masters—there would be sometimes four or five artists taking copies of the pictures. These copies they were going to carry with them, perhaps, to distant lands; and I have thought that your life and character are a masterpiece, and it is being copied, and long after you are gone it will bloom or blast in the homes of those who knew you, and be a Gorgon or a Madonna. Look out what you say. Look out what you do. Eternity will hear the echo. The best sermon ever preached is a holy life. The best music ever chanted is a consistent walk. If you want others

to serve God, serve Him yourself. If you want others to shoulder their duty, shoulder yours. Where Abimelech goes his troops go. Abraham begat Isaac, and Isaac begat Jacob. The father good, it was easy enough for the son and grandson to be good. Ahaziah begat Joash, and Joash begat Jeroboam. The father bad, it was easy enough for the son and grandson to be bad. Oh, start out for heaven to-day, and your family will come after you, and your business associates will come after you, and your social friends will join you. With one branch of the tree of life for a baton, marshal just as many as you can gather. Oh, the infinite, the semi-omnipotent power of a good or a bad example!

I saw the other day, near the beach, a wrecker's machine. It was a cylinder with some holes at the side, made for the thrusting in of some long poles with strong leverage; and when there is another vessel in trouble or going to pieces out in the offing, the wreckers shoot a rope out to the suffering men. They grasp it, and the wreckers turn the cylinder, and the rope winds around the cylinder, and those who are shipwrecked are saved. So at your feet, to-day, there is an influence with

#### A TREMENDOUS LEVERAGE.

The rope attached to it swings far out into the billowy future. Your children, your children's children, and all the generations that are to follow, will grip that influence, and feel the long-reaching pull long after the figures on your tombstone are so near worn out that the visitor cannot tell whether it was in 1874, or 1774, or 1674, that you died.

Still further, I learn from this subject *the advantage of concerted action*. If Abimelech had merely gone out with a tree branch, the work would not have been accomplished, or if ten, twenty, or thirty men had gone; but when all the axes are lifted, and all the sharp edges fall, and all these

men carry each his tree branch down and throw it about the temple, the victory is gained—the temple falls. My friends, where there is one man in the Church of God at this day shouldering his whole duty, there are a great many who never lift an axe or swing a bow. It seems to me as if there were ten drones in every hive to one busy bee; as though there were twenty sailors sound asleep in the ship's hammock to four men on the stormy deck. It seems as if there were fifty thousand men belonging to the reserve corps, and only one thousand active combatants. Oh, we all want our boat to get over to the golden sands; but the most of us are seated either in the prow or in the stern, wrapped in our striped shawl, holding a big-handled sunshade, while others are blistered in the heat, and pull until the oar-locks groan, and the blades bend till they snap. Oh, you religious sleepy heads, wake up! While we have in our church a great many who are toiling for God, there are some too lazy to brush the flies off their heavy eyelids. You have laid so long in one place that the ants and caterpillars have begun to crawl over you! I should not wonder if some of this church membership should wake up in hell. What do you know, my brother, about a living Gospel made to storm the world? Now, my idea of a Christian is a man on fire with zeal for God; and if your pulse ordinarily beats sixty times a minute when you think of other themes, and talk about other themes, if your pulse does not go up to seventy-five or eighty when you come to talk about Christ and heaven, it is because you do not know the one, and have a poor chance of getting to the other.

In a former charge, one Sabbath, I took into the pulpit the church records, and I laid them on the pulpit and opened them, and said: "Brethren, here are the church records. I find a great many of you whose names are down here are off duty." Some were afraid I would read the names, for at

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that time some of them were deep in the worst kind of oil stocks, and were idle as to Christian work. But if the ministers of Christ in Brooklyn, and New York, and in all the cities, to-day, should bring the church records into the pulpit and read, oh,

WHAT A FLUTTER THERE WOULD BE!

There would not be fans enough in church to keep the cheeks cool. I do not know but it would be a good thing if the minister once in a while should bring the church records in the pulpit and call the roll, for that is what I consider every church record to be—merely the muster-roll of the Lord's army; and the reading of it should reveal where every soldier is and what he is doing. Suppose, in military circles, on the morning of battle, the roll is called, and out of a thousand men only a hundred men in the regiment answered. What excitement there would be in the camp! What would the colonel say? What high talking there would be among the captains, and majors, and the adjutants! Suppose word came to headquarters that these delinquents excused themselves on the ground that they had overslept themselves, or that the morning was damp and they were afraid of getting their feet wet, or that they were busy cooking rations. My friends, this is the morning of the day of God Almighty's battle! Do you not see the troops? Hear you not all the trumpets of heaven and all the drums of hell? Which side are you on? If you are on the right side, to what cavalry troop, to what artillery service, to what garrison duty do you belong? In other words, in what Sabbath-school do you teach? in what prayer-meeting do you exhort? to what penitentiary do you declare eternal liberty? to what almshouse do you announce the riches of heaven? What broken bone of sorrow have you ever set? Are you doing nothing? Is it possible that a man or woman

sworn to be a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ is doing nothing? Then hide the horrible secret from the angels. Keep it away from the book of judgment. If you are doing nothing, do not let the world find it out, lest they charge your religion with being a false face. Do not let your cowardice and treason be heard among the martyrs about the throne, lest they forget the sanctity of the place and curse your betrayal of that cause for which they agonized and died.

May the eternal God rouse us all to action! As for myself, I feel I would be ashamed to die now and enter heaven until I have accomplished something more decisive for the Lord that bought me. I have thought on this, the first Sabbath after the summer vacation, I would like to join with you in an oath, with hand high uplifted to heaven, swearing new allegiance to Jesus Christ, and to work more for His cause and kingdom. Oh! brethren, how swiftly the time does go by! It seems to me I never saw such a swift summer—never a summer that had such nimble feet. It seems to me as if the years had gained some new power of locomotion—a kind of speed electric. Last Sabbath was an awful day to me. I had nothing to do but to think, and when I thought of how little I had accomplished for Christ, and of how short a time yet remained to work for Him, my head grew dizzy and my heart ached, and I felt as if I must fly into your presence and utter this rallying cry for Jesus.

If, this afternoon, you take a short sleep (and you are entitled to it, for God intended the Sabbath not only for rest for the soul, but rest for the body), you will at least have one or two hours in which to lay out a plan for Christian work in this ecclesiastical year. Husband and wife, talk with each other. Brothers and sisters, resolve upon some new work for Christ. On your knees cry unto God: "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" and

## STAY ON YOUR KNEES

until you get the answer. Are you ready to join with me in some new work for Christ? I feel that there is such a thing as claustral piety, that there is such a thing as insular work; but it seems to me that what we want now is concerted action. The temple of Berith is very broad, and it is very high. It has been going up by the hands of men and devils, and no human enginery can demolish it; but if the fifty thousand ministers of Christ in this country should each take a branch of the tree of life, and all their congregations should do the same, and we should march on and throw these branches around the great temples of sin, and worldliness, and folly, it would need no match, or coal, or torch of ours to touch off the pile, for, as in the days of Elijah, fire would fall from heaven and kindle the bonfire of Christian victory over demolished sin. It is kindling now! Huzzah! The day is ours!

Still further, I learn from this subject the danger of false refuges. As soon as these Shechemites got into the temple, they thought they were safe. They said: "Berith will take care of us. Abimelech may batter down everything else; he cannot batter down this temple where we are now hid." But very soon they heard the timbers crackling, and they were smothered with smoke, and they miserably died. And you and I are just as much tempted to false refuges. The mirror this morning may have persuaded you that you have a comely cheek; your best friends may have persuaded you that you have elegant manners; Satan may have told you that you are all right; but bear with me if I tell you that if unpardoned you are all wrong. I have no clinometer by which to measure how steep is the inclined plane you are descending, but I know it is very steep. "Well," you say: "if the Bible is true, I am a sinner. Show me some refuge. I will step right into it." I suppose every person in this

audience this moment is stepping into some kind of refuge. Here you step in the tower of good works. You say: "I shall be safe here, in this refuge." The battlements are adorned; the steps are varnished; on the wall are pictures of all the suffering you have alleviated, and all the schools you have established, and all the fine things you have ever done. Up in that tower you feel you are safe. But hear you not the tramp of your unpardoned sins all around the tower? They each have a match. They are kindling the combustible material. You feel the heat and the suffocation. Oh! may you leap in time, the Gospel declaring: "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified." "Well," you say: "I have been driven out of that tower; where shall I go?" Step into this tower of indifference. You say: - If this tower is attacked, it will be a great while before it is taken." You feel at ease. But there is an Akimlech, with ruthless assault, coming on. Death and his forces are gathering around, and they demand that you surrender everything, and they clamour for your immortal overthrow, and they throw their skeleton arms in the window, and with their iron fists they beat against the door, and while you are trying to keep them out you see the torches of judgment kindling, and every forest is a torch, and every mountain a torch, and every sea a torch, and while the Alps, and Pyrenees, and Himalayas turn into a live coal, driven redden and redder by the whirlwind breath of a God omnipotent, what will become of your refuge of lies?

"But," says some one, "you are engaged in a very mean business, driving us from tower to tower." Oh, no! I want to tell you of a Gibraltar that never has been and never will be taken; of a wall that no Satanic assault can scale: of a bulwark that the judgment earthquakes cannot bridge. The Bible refers to it when it says: "In God is thy refuge, and underneath thee are the everlasting arms." Oh! King of

self into it. Tread down unceremoniously everything that intercepts you.

WEDGE YOUR WAY THERE.

There are enough hounds of death and peril after you to make you hurry. Many a man has perished just outside the tower, with his foot on the step, with his hand on the latch. Oh! get inside. Not one surplus second have you to spare. Quick, quick, quick!

There are some who gave me a farewell shake of the hand when I went off two months ago who are not here to-day. Where are they? When in the closing service I opened my hymn-book and found the place, they opened their hymn-book and found the same place. I open my book to-day; they do not open theirs. Great God, is life such an uncertain thing? If I bear a little too hard with my right foot on the earth, does it break through into the grave? Is this world which swings at the speed of thousands of miles an hour around about the sun going with tenfold more speed towards the judgment day? Oh, I am overborne with the thought, and in the confusion I cry to one and I cry to the other: "O time! O eternity! O the dead! O the judgment day! O Jesus! O God!" But catching at the last apostrophe, I feel that I have something to hold on to; for "in God is thy refuge, and underneath thee are the everlasting arms." And exhausted with my failure to save myself, I throw my whole weight of body, mind, and soul on this Divine promise, as a weary child throws itself into the arms of its mother; as a wounded soldier throws himself on the hospital pillow; as a pursued man throws himself into the refuge: for "in God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." I can speak no more for the gladness. Oh for a flood of tears with which to express the joy of this eternal rescue!



## THE OLD CORN OF CANAAN.

"And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land."—*Joshua* v. 12.

ONLY those who have had something to do with the commissariat of an army know what a job it is to feed and clothe five or six hundred thousand men. Well, there is such a host as that marching across the desert. They are cut off from all army supplies. There are no rail trains bringing down food or blankets. Shall they all perish? No. The Lord comes from heaven to the rescue, and He touches the shoes and the coats which in a year or two would have been worn to rags and tatters, and they become storm-proof and time-proof; so that after forty years of wearing, the coats and the shoes are as good as new. Besides that, every morning there is a shower of bread—not sour and soggy, for the rising of that bread is made in heaven, and celestial fingers have mixed it and rolled it into balls, light, flaky, and sweet, as though they were the crumbs thrown out from a heavenly banquet. Two batches of bread made every day in the upper mansion—one for those who sit at the table with the King, and the other for the marching Israelites in the wilderness. I do not very much pity the Israelites for the fact that they had only manna to eat. It was, I suppose, the best food ever provided. I know that the ravens brought food to hungry Elijah; but I should not so well have liked those black waiters. Rather would I have the fare that came down every morning in buckets of dew,—clean, sweet, God-provided edibles. But now the Israelites have taken their last bit of it in their fingers, and put the last delicate morsel of it to their lips. They look out and there is no manna. Why this cessation of heavenly supply? It was because the Israelites had arrived in Canaan, and they smelled the breath of the harvest fields,

and the crowded barns of the country were thrown open to them. All the inhabitants had fled, and in the name of the Lord of Hosts the Israelites took possession of everything. Well, the threshing-floor is cleared, the corn is scattered over it, the oxen are brought round in lazy and perpetual circuit until the corn is trampled loose; then it is winnowed with a fan, and it is ground, and it is baked, and lo! there is enough bread for all the worn-out host: "And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land."

The bisection of this subject leads me, first, to speak of especial relief for especial emergency; and, secondly, of the old corn of the Gospel for ordinary circumstances.

If these Israelites crossing the wilderness had not received bread from the heavenly bakeries, there would first have been a long line of dead children half buried in the sand; then there would have been a long line of dead women waiting for the jackals; then there would have been a long line of dead men unburied, because there would have been no one to bury them. It would have been told in the history of the world that a great company of good people started out from Egypt for Canaan, and were never heard of—as

#### THOROUGHLY LOST IN THE WILDERNESS

of sand as the *City of Boston* and the *President* were lost in the wilderness of waters. What use was it to them that there was plenty of corn in Canaan, or plenty of corn in Egypt? What they wanted was something to eat right there, where there was not so much as a grass-blade. In other words, an especial supply for an especial emergency. That is what some of you want. The ordinary comfort, the ordinary direction, the ordinary counsel, do not seem to meet your case. There are those who feel that they must have an omnipotent and immediate supply, and you shall have it.

Is it pain and physical distress through which you must go? Does not Jesus know all about pain? Did He not suffer it in the most sensitive part of head, and hand, and foot? He has a mixture of comfort, one drop of which shall cure the worst paroxysm. It is the same grace that soothed Robert Hall when, after writhing on the carpet in physical tortures, he cried out: "Oh, I suffered terribly, but I didn't cry out while I was suffering, did I? Did I cry out?" There is no such nurse as Jesus—His hand the gentlest, His foot the lightest, His arm the strongest. For especial pang, especial help.

Is it approaching sorrow? Is it long, shadowing bereavement that you know is coming, because the breath is short, and the voice is faint, and the cheek is pale? Have you been calculating your capacity or incapacity to endure widowhood, or childlessness, or a disbanded home, and cried: "I cannot endure it?" Oh, worried soul, you will wake up amid all your troubles and find around about you the sweet consolations of the Gospel as thickly strewn as was the manna around about the Israelitish encampment. Especial solace for especial distress.

Or is it a trouble past, yet present? A silent nursery? A vacant chair opposite you at the table? A choking sense of loneliness? A blot of grief so large that it extinguishes the light of sun, and puts out bloom of flower, and makes you reckless as to whether you live or die? Especial comfort for that especial trial. Your appetite has failed for everything else. Oh, try a little of this wilderness manna. "I will never leave thee, I will never forsake thee." "As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth you." "Can a mother forget her sucking child that she should not have compassion upon the son of her womb? Yea, she may forget, yet will not I."

Or is it the grief of a dissipated companion? There are

those here who have it, so I am not speaking in the abstract, but to the point. You have not whispered it, perhaps, to your most intimate friend; but you see your home going away gradually from you, and unless things change soon it will be entirely destroyed. Your grief was well depicted by a woman, presiding at a woman's meeting last winter in Ohio, when her intoxicated husband staggered up to the platform, to her overwhelming mortification and the disturbance of the audience, and she pulled a protruding bottle from her husband's pocket, and held it up before the audience and cried out: "There is the cause of my woe. There are the tears and the life-blood of a drunkard's wife." And then looking up to heaven, she said:

"HOW LONG, O LORD, HOW LONG?"

and then, looking down to the audience, cried: "Do you wonder I feel strongly on this subject? Sisters, will you help me?" And hundreds of voices responded: "Yes, yes, we will help you." You stand, some of you, in such a tragedy to-day. You cannot even ask him to stop drinking. It makes him cross, and he tells you to mind your own business. Is there any relief in such a case? Not such as is found in the rigmarole of comfort ordinarily given in such cases. But there is a relief that drops in manna from the throne of God. Oh, lift up your lacerated soul in prayer, and you will get Omnipotent comfort. I do not know in what words the soothing influence may come, but I know that for special grief there is especial deliverance. I give you two or three passages. Try them on. Take that which best fits your soul. "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth." "All things work together for good to those who love God." "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." I know there are those who, when they try to comfort people, always bring the same stale sentiment about

the usefulness of trial. Instead of bringing a new plaster for a new wound, and fresh manna for fresh hunger, they rummage their haversack to find some crumb of old consolation, when from horizon to horizon the ground is white with the new-fallen manna of God's help not five minutes old!

But after fourteen thousand six hundred consecutive days of falling manna—Sundays excepted—the manna ceased. Some of them were glad of it. You know they had complained to their leader, and wondered that they had to eat manna instead of onions. Now the fare is changed. Those people in that army under forty years of age had never seen a corn-field, and now, when they hear the leaves rustling, and see the tassels waving, and the billows of green flowing over the plain as the wind touched them, it must have been a new and lively sensation. "Corn!" cried the old man, as he husked an ear. "Corn!" cried the children, as they counted the shining grains. "Corn!" shouted the vanguard of the host, as they burst open the granaries of the affrighted population—the granaries that had been left in the possession of the victorious Israelites. Then the fire was kindled, and the ears of corn were thrust into it, and fresh and crisp, and tender, were devoured by the hungry victors; and bread was prepared, and many things that can be made out of flour regaled the appetites that had been sharpened by the long march: "And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land."

Blessed be God, we stand in just such a field to-day; the luxuriant grain coming above the girdle, the air full of the odours of the ripe old corn of the Gospel Canaan. "Oh!" you say, "the fare is too plain." Then I remember you will soon get tired of a fanciful diet. While I was in Paris I liked for a while the rare and exquisite cookery; but I soon wished I was home again, and had the plain fare of my

native land. So it is a fact that we soon weary of the syrups, and the custards, and the whipped foam of fanciful religionists, and we cry, "Give us plain bread made out of the old corn of the Gospel Canaan."

THAT IS THE ONLY FOOD

that can quell the soul's hunger.

There are men here this morning who hardly know what is the matter with them. They have tried to get together a fortune and larger account at the bank, and to get investments yielding larger percentages. They are trying to satisfy their soul with a diet of bank notes and government securities. There are others here who have been trying to get famous, and have succeeded to a greater or less extent; and they have been trying to satisfy their soul with the chopped feed of magazines and newspapers. All these men are no more happy now than before they made the first thousand pounds—no more happy now than when for the first time they saw their names favourably mentioned. They cannot analyze or define their feelings; but I will tell them what is the matter: they are hungry for the old corn of the Gospel. That you must have, or be pinched, and wan, and wasted, and hollow-eyed, and shrivelled up with an eternity of famine.

The infidel scientists of this day are offering us a different kind of soul food; but they are, of all men, the most miserable. I have known many of them; but I never knew one of them who came within a thousand miles of being happy. The great John Stuart Mill provided for himself a new kind of porridge, but yet, when he comes to die, he acknowledges that his philosophy never gave him any comfort in days of bereavement, and in a roundabout way he admits that his life was a failure. So it is with all infidel scientists. They are trying to live on telescopes, and cruci-

bles, and protoplasms, and they charge us with cant, not realizing that there is no such intolerable cant in all the world as this perpetual talk we are hearing about "positive philosophy," and "the absolute," and "the great-to-be," and "the everlasting no," and "the higher unity," and "the latent potentialities," and "the cathedral of the immensities." I have been translating what these men have been writing, and I have been transcribing what they have been doing, and I will tell you what it all means. It means that they want to kill God! And my only wonder is that God has not killed them. I have, in other days, tasted of their confections, and I come back and tell you to-day that there is no nutriment, or life, or health in anything but the bread made out of the old corn of the Gospel. What do I mean by that? I mean that Christ is the bread of life, and, taking Him, you live, and live for ever.

But, you say, corn is of but little practical use unless it is threshed, and ground, and baked. I answer, this Gospel corn has gone through that process. When on Calvary all the hoofs of human scorn came down on the heart of Christ, and all the flails of Satanic fury beat Him long and fast, was not the corn threshed? When the mills of God's indignation against sin caught Christ between the upper and nether rollers, was not the corn ground? When Jesus descended into hell, and the flames of the lost world wrapped Him all about, was not the corn baked? Oh, yes! Christ is ready. His pardon all ready; His peace all ready;

#### EVERYTHING READY IN CHRIST.

Are you ready for Him?

You say: "That is such a simple Gospel!" I know it is. You say you thought religion was a strange mixture of elaborate compounds. No, it is so plain that any abecedarian may understand it. In its simplicity is its power.

If you could, this morning, realize that Christ died to save from sin, and death, and hell, not only your minister and your neighbour, and your father and your child, but y-o-u, it would make this hour like the judgment-day for agitations, and, no longer able to keep your seat, you would leap up, crying: "*For me ! FOR ME !*"

A new convert said: "I could not sleep, thinking over that passage, 'Whosoever believeth on the Son hath life;' and so I got up, and lighted a candle, and found my Bible, and read it over: 'Whosoever believeth on the Son hath life.'" "Why," says some one, "didn't you know that was in the Bible before?" "Oh, yes," he replied: "I knew it was in the Bible, but I wanted to see it with my own eyes, and then I rested." God grant that you, my brother, may see it with your own eyes, and hear it with your own ears, and feel it with your own heart, that you are a lost soul, but that Christ comes for your extrication. Can you not take that truth and digest it, and make it a part of your immortal life? It is only bread.

You have noticed that invalids cannot take all kinds of food. The food that will do for one will not do for another. There are kinds of food which will produce, in cases of invalidism, very speedy death. But you have noticed that all persons, however weak they may be, can take bread. Oh, soul sick with sin, invalid in your transgressions, I think this Gospel will agree with you. I think if you cannot take anything else, you can take this. Lost—found! Sunken—raised! Condemned—pardoned! Cast out—invited in! That is the old corn of the Gospel.

You have often seen a wheel with spokes of different colours, and when the wheel was rapidly turned all the colours blended into a rainbow of exquisite beauty. I wish I could, this morning, take the peace, and the life, and the joy, and glory of Christ, and turn them before your soul



with such speed and strength that you would be enchanted with the revolving splendours of that name which is above every name — the name written once with tears of exile and in blood of martyrdom, but written now in burnished crown, and lifted sceptre, and trans-angelic throne.

There is another characteristic about bread, and that is you never get tired of it. There are people here seventy years of age who find it just as appropriate for their appetite as they did when, in boyhood, their mother cut a slice of it clear around the loaf. You have not got tired of bread, and that is a characteristic of the Gospel. Old Christian man,

#### ARE YOU TIRED OF JESUS?

If so, let us take His name out of our Bible, and let us with pen and ink erase that name wherever we see it. Let us cast it out of our hymnology, and let "There is a Fountain," and "Rock of Ages" go into forgetfulness. Let us tear down the communion table where we celebrate His love. Let us dash down the baptismal bowl where we were consecrated to Him. Let us hurl Jesus from our heart, and ask some other hero to come in. Let us say: "Go away, Jesus; I want another companion, another friend, than Thou art." Could you do it? The years of your past life, aged man, would utter a protest against it, and the graves of your Christian dead would charge you with being an ingrate, and your little grandchildren would say: "Grandfather, don't do that. Jesus is the One to whom we say our prayers at night, and who is to open heaven when we die? Grandfather, don't do that." Tired of Jesus? The Burgundy rose you pluck from the garden is not so fresh, and fair, and beautiful. Tired of Jesus? As well get weary of the spring morning, and the voices of the mountain stream, and the quiet of your own home, and the

gladness of your own children. Jesus is bread, and the appetite for that is never obliterated.

I notice, in regard to this article of food, you take it three times a day. It is on your table morning, noon, and night, and if it is forgotten, you say: "Where is the bread?" Just so certainly you need Jesus three times a day. Oh, do not start out without Him; do not dare to go out of the front door; do not dare to go off the front steps, without first having communed with Him. Before noon there may be perils that will destroy body, mind, and soul for ever. You cannot afford to do without Him. You will during the day be amid sharp hoofs and swift wheels, and dangerous scaffoldings threatening the body, and traps for the soul that have taken some who are more wily than you. When they shove a vessel from the dry-dock, they break against the side of it a bottle of wine. That is a sort of superstition among sailors. But oh, on the launching of every day, that we might strike against it at least one earnest prayer for Divine protection. That would not be superstition: that would be Christian. Then at the apex of the day, at the tip-top of the hours, equi-distant from morning and night, look three ways. Look backward to the forenoon; look ahead to the afternoon; look up to that Saviour who presides over all. You want bread at noon. You may find no place in which to kneel amid the cotton bales and the tierces of rice; but if Jonah could find room to pray in the whale's belly, most certainly you will never be in such a crowded place that you cannot pray. Bread at noon! When the evening hour comes, and your head is buzzing with the day's engagements, and your whole nature is sore from the abrasion of rough life, and you see a great many duties you have neglected, then commune with Christ, asking His pardon, thanking Him for His love.

That would be a queer evening repast at which there was no bread.

This is the nutriment and life of the plain Gospel that I commend to you. I do not know how some of our ministers make it so intricate, and elaborate, and mystifying a thing. It seems as if they had a sort of mongrelism in religion—part humanitarianism, part spiritualism, part nothing-arianism; and sometimes you think they are building their temple out of the “Rock of Ages,” but you find there is no rock in it at all. It is stucco. The Gospel is plain. It is bread. There are no fogs hovering over this river of life. All the fogs hover over the marsh of human speculation. If you cannot tell when you hear a man preach whether or not he believes in the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, it is because he does not believe in it. If, when you hear a man preach, you cannot tell whether or not he believes that sin is inborn, it is because he does not think it is congenital. If, when you hear a man talk in pulpit or prayer-meeting, you cannot make up your mind whether or not he believes in regeneration, it is because he does not believe in it. If, when you hear a man speak on religious themes, you cannot make up your mind whether or not he thinks the righteous and the wicked will come out at the same place, then it is because he really believes their destinies are conterminous.

DO NOT TALK TO ME

about a man being doubtful about the doctrines of grace. He is not doubtful to me at all. Bread is bread, and I know it the moment I see it. I had a corn-field which I cultured this summer with my own hand. I did not ask once in all the summer: “Is this corn?” I did not hunt up the *Agriculturist* to get a picture of corn. I was born in sight of a corn-field, and I know all about it. When these Israelites came to Canaan and looked off upon the fields, the

cry was: "Corn! Corn!" And if a man has once tasted of this heavenly bread he knows it right away. He can tell this corn of the Gospel Canaan from "the chaff which the wind driveth away." I bless God so many have found this Gospel corn. It is the bread of which if a man eat he shall never hunger. I set the gladness of your soul to the tunes of "Ariel" and "Antioch." I ring the wedding bells, for Christ and your soul are married, and there is no power on earth or in hell to get out letters of divorcement.

But alas for the famine-struck. Enough corn, yet it seems you have no sickle to cut it, no mill to grind it, no fire to bake it, no appetite to eat it. Starving to death, when the plain is golden with a magnificent harvest. My brother, if your friends had acted as crazily about worldly things as you have acted about spiritual things, you would have sent them before this to Bloomingdale Insane Asylum. You do not seem to realize the hunger that is gnawing on your soul, the precipices on the edge of which you walk, the fires into which you run. Oh, the insanity, the awful madness, of a man that will not take Christ. When I think of the risks you run, it seems as if I must rush from the pulpit and take you by the shoulder and tell you of what is coming and how little you are ready for it.

This summer I rode some thirteen miles to see the *Alexander da Valley*, a steamer that was beached near Southampton, Long Island, last winter. It was a splendid vessel. As I walked up and down the decks, and in the cabins, I said: "What a pity that this vessel should go to pieces, or be lying here idle." The coast wreckers had spent several thousand pounds trying even to get her off, and succeeded once; but she came back again to the old place. While I was walking on deck every part of the vessel trembled with the beating of the surf on one side. Since then I heard that that vessel, which was worth fifty thousand pounds, had been sold

for seven hundred pounds, and is to be knocked to pieces. They had given up the idea of getting her to sail again. How suggestive all that is to me! There are those here who are aground in religious things. Once you started for heaven, but you are now aground. Several times we thought we had started you again heavenward, but you soon got back to the old place, and there is not much prospect you will ever reach the harbours of the blessed. I fear it will be after awhile said in regard to some of you: "No use. No use. To be destroyed without remedy." God's wreckers will pronounce you a hopeless case. *Beached for eternity!* And then it will be written in heaven, concerning some one of your size, and complexion, and age, and name, that he was invited to be saved, but refused the offer, and starved to death within sight of the fields and granaries full of the Old Corn of Canaan.

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### ASTRAY FROM THE FOLD.

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."—*Isaiah liii. 6.*

IN ninety years, at the longest, all this audience will be in heaven or in hell. This service will decide the eternity for some who are present. This will be the last sermon that some of you will ever hear. I have a nature somewhat poetic, and I might try to please you with trope, and metaphor, and simile; but I dare not under such circumstances. I do not think that God ever gave to any man greater fondness for mirth than I have, and yet I dare not indulge it amid these considerations. This night is a life struggle and a death grapple, and woe be to that man who shall try to divert this august assemblage from the one issue.

The first part of my text is an indictment. "All we like sheep have gone astray." Says some one: "Can't you drop the first word?" And some one rises and looks off and says: "There is a man who is a blasphemer, he is astray. And yonder is a man who is impure, and he is astray. And yonder is a man who is fraudulent, and he is astray." Sit down, my brother, and look at home, for the first word of the text takes you and me as well as the rest: "*All* we like sheep have gone astray."

I have studied the habits of sheep, and I know they lose their way sometimes by trying to get other pasture, and sometimes by being scared with the dogs. There are many of you who have been looking for better pasture. You have wandered on and wandered on. You tried business successes, you tried worldly associations, you tried the club-house. You said that the Church was a short commons, and you wanted to find the rank grass on the bank of distant streams, and to lie down under great oaks on the other side of the hills. Have you found the anticipated pasture that was to be so superior? How are you getting on now in the club-house? What did they do for you in the way of comfort when the baby died? Did they make up for the flaxen hair, and the blue eyes, and the dimpled cheeks? Were not the plain Christian man and the plain Christian woman who came in and sat up nights with your darling of more solace than all worldly associations? Did all the convivial songs you ever heard give you such peace as the song those people sang in your bereaved home? the very words that your little child had learned to sing in the Sabbath-school:

"There is a happy land  
Far, far away,  
Where saints in glory stand  
Bright, bright as day."

Did you find comfort in your business associations? Did

the grass grow very thick around about your insurance office, or your broker's shop, or your retail store, or your importing establishment? God help the man that has nothing but business to comfort him! Your business, instead of soothing you, exasperated you, and wore you out, and left you limp as a rag, and made you mad. You got money, but

YOU GOT NO PEACE;

and so far from getting a fit pasture for a starving nature, you found none of it in the world; and the further you went, the more blasted the heath, and the sharper the rocks, and the thicker the nettles. They insulted you with garbage when you wanted bread. Their flatteries were like the lick of a lion's tongue, which takes off the flesh that it licks. A great English actor stood on the stage, and thunders of applause from the galleries greeted his impersonations, and yet he was utterly chagrined because one man sat asleep before him; and with indignation he cried out: "Wake up, sir!" So in your life, there has been some little annoyance that has more than overpowered all your brilliant congratulations. You went away from God and peace with the idea of finding better pasturage, and your adventure has been a failure. You found yourself browsing amid sharp and stinging misfortunes. Oh, the world is a good rack from which a horse may pick his forage; and it is a good trough from which the swine may crunch their mess; but it affords no satisfactory food for a soul blood-bought and immortal.

I have noticed, also, that the sheep get astray by being frightened with the dogs. The hound gets in the field. The poor things are frenzied. They forget their path and dart away, and are torn of the hedges and plashed of the ditch. They do not get home that night. They never get home unless the farmer goes after them and brings them back.



Oh, man, that is the way you got astray. In 1857, or in the fall of 1873, you became almost an atheist. You said: "Where is God, that He allows an honest man to go down, and thieves to prosper?" And you were dogged for the rent, and dogged by the banks, and you were dogged by creditors; and some of you went into misanthropy, and some of you took to strong drink, and some of you fled from all Christian associations; and in that way the sheep got astray. Oh, man, that was the last time for you to leave God. How could you stand amid your foundering fortunes and all your scattering hopes with no God to comfort, no God to explain, no God to deliver? I wonder you are not dead, for I cannot understand how a boat can live an hour unhelped in such a chopped sea.

I do not know by just what process you got astray; but the Bible announces it, and your partial consciousness on the subject reaffirms it, that you, like sheep, have gone astray; and if you could see yourself to-night as God sees you, your soul would burst into a tempest of agony, and you would throw up your arms as though you were sinking, and you would pelt the heavens with one loud and awful cry of "God, have mercy!" But the sad thing about your case is, you do not realize you are fully astray. All the batteries of Mount Sinai are unlimbered above you and are aimed at your soul. As, when Sebastopol was assaulted, there were two Russian frigates burning in the harbour all night, throwing a lurid glare on the trembling fortress, so you stand to-night amid a cannonade, and a darkness, and a conflagration, and an accumulation of peril that make the wings of God's hovering angels shudder to the tip. Oh, hear you not, see you not, the fiery belch of the great guns! "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin,



so death hath passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." "The wages of sin is death." "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."

But the last part of my text opens a door wide enough to let us all out, and wide enough to let all heaven in. Sound it on the organ, with all the stops out! Thrum it on the harp, with all the strings attuned! Let earth tell it to heaven, and heaven tell it back again to earth: "On Him, on Him the Lord hath laid the iniquity of us all." I am glad the prophet did not waste any time in telling us who he meant by "Him." It is Him of the manger. Him of the bloody sweat. Him of the crucifixion agony. Him of the resurrection throne. "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

Says some one: "That is not generous. Let every one bear his own burdens." And

#### THERE IS SOMETHING IN THAT.

If I owe a debt, and I have money to pay it, and I come to you and ask you to cancel my obligation, you would be right in saying to me: "Pay your own debts." If I am walking along the street with you, and we are both hale and hearty, and I want you to carry me, you are right in saying: "Walk on your own feet." But suppose you and I were in a regiment together, and I was fearfully wounded in the battle, and I fell unconscious at your feet with gun-shot fractures and dislocations, five bullets having struck me at once—you would say to your comrades: "Here, this man is helpless. Let us carry him to the ambulance; let us take him out to the hospital." And you would take me up in your arms, and I would be a dead weight, and you would beckon to the corps of the ambulance: "Bring your waggon around this way, and take this man up to the hospital." You would put me in the ambulance, and you would have done your duty.



Would it have been mean to let you carry me then? You certainly would not have been so unkind as not to carry me. Now, that is Christ to the soul. If we could pay our spiritual obligations we might go up to God and say: "Lord, there is so much debt, and here I have the means with which to cancel it. Now cross it all out." The debt is paid. But the fact is we are pierced through and through with the sabres of sin. We have gone down under the hot fire, and we are helpless and undone. We will die on the field unless some help comes to us. God sends His ambulance, yea, He dispatches His only son to carry us out, and bind up our gashes, and take us home. "On Him, on Him the Lord hath laid the iniquity of us all." Oh, my friends, we were a dead weight in Christ's arms; all our sins about us; all our chains on us. If Christ raises us at all it will not be by the tips of the fingers, it will not be with one arm; it will be by getting down on one knee, and putting around us His omnipotent arms, and throwing all the energy of His God-head into one dead lift that He will raise us up to honour, and glory, and immortality. "On Him the Lord hath laid the iniquity of us all."

Is there any man in the house who is under the delusion that he can carry his own sins? You cannot. You cannot. You might as well try to transport a boulder of the sea, or carry on one shoulder the Alleghanies, and on the other shoulder Mount Washington. You cannot carry one of your sins into the eternal world, and carry it peacefully. Most certainly you cannot carry a whole lifetime of transgression. Oh, then, to-night let us shift the burden. Jesus stoops down, and He looks in your face, and says: "I come to carry your sins and your sorrows. Put them upon My bleeding back. I have come through all these lacerating days, and through all these tempestuous nights. My tongue bitten with pain, the blood bursting from My brow, to carry your

sins, and throw them down over the precipice. Put those sins upon Me; put them upon Me." "And the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

Who here wants to keep his sins? They have almost pestered your life out. Sometimes they have made you cross and unreasonable, and spoiled the joy of your days and the peace of your nights. There are men in this house, to-night, who have been riddled with sin. You know this world can give you no solace. It is all gossamery and volatile, and as to eternity, it is to you a black and suffocating midnight; and you writhe under the stings of a conscience which promises you no rest here and no rest hereafter. And yet you do not pray, and you do not repent, and you do not weep, although this very night may be the one in which you shall lift the shriek of the soul that takes the long, last plunge. There have been people who have come into this Tabernacle, and heard the Gospel—for

I PREACH NOTHING ELSE,—

and refused it, and gone out, and they died, and their voice comes to us to-night from the darkness, saying: "Take the Gospel. I missed my chance. Your day lasts—mine is closed. Woe is me. I am undone. Who will shove back this bolt? Who will put out this fire?" And the caverns forlornly echo: "Who? who?" And the destroyed souls clutch for the worm that dies not to tear it from the vitals, and they clutch into the air as for a hope they cannot reach. Then crouching amid the furnaces, crying: "All this for ever! for ever! for ever! for ever! for ever!" Oh, my brother, that is what sin has done for them, and that is what sin will do for you unless you lay hold "on Him on whom the Lord hath laid the iniquities of us all."

Blessed be God, to-night there is a fair chance for every man in this Tabernacle. If at this moment this meeting

could be thrown open, and you could all speak, you would, I think, hear a man in the gallery say: "I had all elegant surroundings, I had the best education, I have moved in most brilliant circles all my days, I thought I was all right, I had a life of outward morality; but one day something whispered in my ear: 'You are a sinner,' and I saw that my hands were red with the blood of the Son of God, and I cried for mercy, and I found it; and that is true what you have been saying to-night: 'On Him the Lord hath laid the iniquity of us all.'" And a man in this gallery would say: "I was one of the worst drunkards in New York. When I came home at night, my children cowered. When they put out their hands to me for a kiss, I struck them; and when my wife protested against the maltreatment, I kicked her into the street. Oh! I have had all the hunger, and the bruises, and the tremors—all the estate of a drunkard's woe. But one night, I was going along by a Methodist meeting-house, and I said: 'I'll go in and see what they are doing.' I went to scoff, but I was overwhelmed with the scene, and I cried for mercy, and then and there found it—the pardoning mercy of God—and it is all true what you have been saying to-night: 'On Him the Lord hath laid the iniquity of us all.' I lifted my family out of the depths to which they were sunken, and now my wife sings all day at her work, and my little children come two blocks down the street to greet me home. And, sir, my house has been a heaven ever since I have become a changed man." Away back in the gallery, if the meeting were still open, a sister would cry out: "I went far astray. I took the leap from which few ever come back. I saw the storm that howls over a lost soul; but Jesus met me one dark night on the street, and He said: 'Go home, poor thing, go home! Your father is waiting for you, your mother is waiting for you—go home, poor thing.' And though I was too weak to pray, I just cried

out all my sins and sorrows on the heart of Him 'on whom the Lord hath laid the iniquity of us all.'" If the meeting were still kept open, a young man seated before me would say: "I was born in the country. I had a good bringing up. I had every advantage. I came to town and got a situation, and one night, in the Broadway Theatre, I met some fellows who did me no good. They dragged me through all the sewers of sin, and I was ashamed to go back, I looked so badly. I lost my place. I lost everything. Sister wrote to me, and father wrote to me, and mother wrote to me: but I didn't answer their letters, for my hand trembled so I knew they would think from the writing there was something the matter. One day a Christian young man put his hand on my shoulder, and said: 'George, come with me, and I will do you good.' I looked up into his face to see whether he was joking or not, and I saw he was in real earnest, so I fixed myself up as well as I could, and I buttoned my coat over my ragged vest, and I went to the meeting; and an old man got up to pray, who looked just like my father, and I sobbed out, and they were so kind and so sympathetic, I could hold out no longer; and there and then I gave my poor wasted body, and my poor bruised soul to Him 'on whom the Lord hath laid the iniquity of us all.'"

Oh, brother, gone so far astray that no one pities you, without your looking at your hand to see whether it is washed or not, without your looking at your hand to see whether it is fevered with sin or not, without your looking at your hand to see whether it is bloated or not, put it in my hand and let me give you one good, warm-hearted, brotherly, Christian grip. You cannot get on any longer with your sins. "Oh," said a man to me this morning, as I went out of the church, "what shall I do? what shall I do?" If he be in the house to-night, I say to him—if there be others in the house in the same temptation, in the same

undone condition, I say to you: let Jesus take your sins all away. You do not want to keep them any longer. 'They have made for you too hard a bed. They have mingled for you too bitter a cup. Oh, Jesus, take them away—take these sins all away—take them out of sight. Away with the accursed things, we want no more to do with them.

But who comes here to-night? Some one with a slow, and weary, and painful step, the mantle of the night over His brow and over His shoulders. I cannot recognize who He is; but coming under the flash of these chandeliers, the mantle of darkness falls from the face, and falls from the shoulders, and I see who it is. It is Jesus, the Son of God! And I say: "Art thou weary?" and He says: "Weary with the world's woe." And I say: "From whence didst Thou come?" And He says: "From Calvary." And I say: "Didst Thou come alone?" And He says: "I have trodden the wine-press alone." And I say: "For what purpose hast Thou come?" and He says: "I have come on a blood-red errand, to take away the sin of all this people." And I look over the audience and I say: "Lord Jesus, canst Thou carry the sins of all this people?" and He says: "Yes, put them upon my shoulder." And then feeling my own sins, I take them first and put them upon Jesus, and I say: "Canst Thou endure more than that?" and He says: "Yea, more." And then there are scores of people in this house that come and bring their sins and put them upon His back; and I say: "Canst thou carry any more?" and He says: "Yea, more." But the Sabbath is nearly done, and so Jesus is departing. Make room for Him through the aisle. Swing open the door and let Him pass out. He is carrying our sins. We shall never see them again. He will throw them into the abysm. "On Him the Lord hath laid the iniquity of us all."

## A CLUSTER FROM ESCHOL.

"And they came unto the brook of Eschol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff."—*Numb.* xiii. 23.

THE long trudge of the Israelites across the wilderness was almost ended. They had come to the borders of the promised land. Of the six hundred thousand adults who started from Egypt for Canaan, how many do you suppose got there? Five hundred thousand? Oh, no. Not two hundred thousand, nor one hundred thousand, nor fifty, nor twenty, nor ten; but only two men. Oh, it was a ruinous march that God's people made; but their children were living and they were on the march, and now that they had come up to the borders of the promised land, they were very curious to know what kind of a place it was, and whether it would be safe to go over. So a scouting party is sent out to reconnoitre, and they examine the land, and they come back bringing specimens of its growths. Just as you came back from California, bringing to your family a basket of pears, or plums, or apples, to show what monstrous fruit they have there, so this scouting party cut off the biggest bunch of grapes they could find. It was so large one man could not carry it, and they thrust a pole through the cluster, and there was one man at either end of the pole, and so the bunch of grapes was transported. I was, some time ago, in a luxuriant vineyard. The vine-dresser had done his work. The vine had clambered up and spread its wealth all over the arbour. The sun and shower had mixed a cup which the vine drank until with flushed cheek it lay slumbering in the light, cluster against the cheek of cluster. The rinds of the grapes seemed almost bursting with the juice in the warm lips of the autumnal day, and it seemed as if all you had to do was to lift a chalice towards the cluster and its life-blood would begin to drip away. But, my friends in

these rigorous climes, we know nothing about large grapes. Strabo states that in Bible times and in Bible lands there were grape-vines so large that it took two men with outstretched arms to reach round them, and he says there were clusters two cubits in length, or twice the length from the elbow to the tip of the long finger. And Achaicus, dwelling in those lands, tells us that during the time he was smitten with fever one grape would slake his thirst for the whole day. No wonder, then, that in these Bible times two men thought it worth their while to put their strength together to carry down one cluster of grapes from the promised land.

But this morning I bring you a larger cluster from the heavenly Eschol—a cluster of hopes, a cluster of prospects, a cluster of Christian consolations; and I am expecting that one taste of it will rouse up your appetite for the heavenly Canaan. During the past summer some of this congregation have

#### GONE AWAY NEVER TO RETURN.

The aged have put down their staff and taken up the sceptre. Men in mid-life came home in July and August, from office or shop, and did not go back again, and never will go back again. And the dear children, some of them, have been gathered in Christ's arms. He found this world too rough a place for them, and so He has gathered them in. And oh, how many wounded souls there are—wounds for which this world offers no medicament, and unless from the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ there shall come a consolation, there will be no consolation at all.

I have thought, therefore, I would not be doing my duty unless from God's Word I brought a cluster of Christian condolence to the people. Oh, that the God of all comfort would help me while I preach, and that the God of all comfort would help you while you hear.



First, I console you with the Divinely sanctioned idea that your departed friends are *as much yours now as they ever were*. I know you sometimes get the idea in your mind, when you have this kind of trouble, that your friends are cut off from you, and they are no longer yours; but the desire to have all our loved ones in the same lot in the cemetery is a natural desire, a universal desire, and, therefore, a God-implanted desire, and is mightily suggestive of the fact that death has no power to break up the family relations. If our loved ones go away from our possession, why put a fence around our lot in the cemetery? Why the gathering of four or five names on one family monument? Why the planting of one cypress-vine so that it covers all the cluster of graves? Why put the husband beside the wife, and the children at their feet? Why the bolt on the gate of our lot, and the charge to the keepers of the ground to see that the grass is cut, and the vine attended to, and the flowers planted? Why not put our departed friends in one common field of graves? Oh, it is because they are ours. That child, O stricken mother! is as much yours this morning as in the solemn hour when God put it against your heart, and said as of old: "Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages." It is no mere whim. It is a Divinely-planted principle in the soul, and God certainly would not plant a lie, and He would not culture a lie! Abraham would not allow Sarah to be buried in a stranger's grounds, although some very beautiful ground was offered him a free gift; but he pays four hundred shekels for Machpelah, the cave, and the trees overshadowing it. That grave has been well kept, and to-day the Christian traveller stands in thoughtful and admiring mood, gazing up Machpelah, where Abraham and Sarah are taking their long sleep of four thousand years. Your father may be slumbering under the tinkling of the bell of the Scotch kirk.

Your brother may have gone down in the ship that foundered off Cape Hatteras. Your little child may be sleeping on the verge of the flowering western prairie; yet God will gather them all up, however widely the dust may be scattered. Nevertheless, it is pleasant to think that we will be buried together. When my father died, and we took him out and put him down in the graveyard of Somerville, it did not seem so sad to leave him there, because right beside him was my dear, good, old, beautiful, Christian mother, and it seemed as if she said: "I was tired, and I came to bed a little early. I am glad you have come; it seems as of old." Oh, it is a consolation to feel that when men come, and with solemn tread

CARRY YOU OUT TO YOUR RESTING-PLACE,

they will open the gate through which some of your friends have already gone, and through which many of your friends will follow. Sleeping under the same roof, at last sleeping under the same sod. The autumnal flowers that drift across your grave will drift across theirs; the bird-songs that drop on their mound will drop on yours; and then, in starless winter nights, when the wind comes howling through the gorge, you will be company for each other. The child close up to the bosom of its mother. The husband and wife re-married; on their lips the sacrament of the dust. Brothers and sisters, who used in sport to fling themselves on the grass, now again reclining side by side in the grave, in flecks of sunlight sifting through the long lithe willows. Then at the trumpet of the archangel to rise side by side, shaking themselves from the dust of ages. The faces that were ghastly and fixed when you saw them last all aflush with the light of incorruption. The father looking around on his children, and saying: "Come, come, my darlings, this is the morning of the resurrection." Mrs.

Sigourney wrote beautifully with the tears and blood of her own broken heart :

“There was a shaded chamber,  
A silent watching band,  
On a low couch a suffering child  
Grasping her mother’s hand.  
But mid the gasp and struggle,  
With shuddering lips she cried,  
‘Mother, oh, dearest mother,  
Bury me by your side.’  
Only one wish she uttered,  
As life was ebbing fast,  
‘Sleep by my side, dear mother,  
And rise with me at last.’ ”

Oh, yes, we want to be buried together. Sweet ante-type of everlasting residence in each other’s companionship.

When the wrecker went down into the cabin of the lost steamer, he found the mother and the child in each other’s arms. It was sad, but it was beautiful, and it was appropriate. Together they went down. Together they will rise. One on earth. One in heaven. Is there not something cheering in all this thought, and something to impress upon us the idea that the departed are ours yet—ours for ever ?

But I console you again with the fact of *your present acquaintanceship and communication with your departed friends*. I have no sympathy, I need not say, with the ideas of modern spiritualism ; but what I mean is the theory set forth by the apostle, when he says : “ We are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses.” Just as in the ancient amphitheatre there were eighty or one hundred thousand people looking down from the galleries upon the combatants in the centre, so, says Paul, there is a great host of your friends in all the galleries of the sky, looking down upon our earthly struggles. It is a sweet, a consoling, a scriptural idea. With

wing of angel, earth and heaven are in constant communication. Does not the Bible say: "Are they not sent forth as ministering spirits to those who shall be heirs of salvation?" And when ministering spirits come down and see us, do they not take some message back? It is impossible to realize, I know, the idea that there is such rapid and perpetual intercommunication of earth and heaven; but it is a glorious reality. You take a rail train and the train is in full motion, and another train from the opposite direction dashes past you so swiftly that you are startled: all the way between here and heaven is filled with the up trains and the down trains—spirits coming—spirits going—coming—going—coming—going. That friend of yours who died this summer—do you not suppose he told all the family news about you in the good land to the friends who are gone? Do you not suppose that when there are hundreds of opportunities every day for them in heaven to hear from you that they ask about you? that they know your tears, your temptations, your struggles, your victories? Aye, they do. Perhaps during the last war you had a boy in the army, and you got a pass and you went through the lines and you found him, and, the regiment coming from your neighbourhood, you knew most of the boys there. One day you started for home. You said: "Well, now, have you any letters to send? any messages to send?" And they filled your pockets with letters, and you started home. Arriving home, the neighbours came in, and one said: "Did you see my John?" and others: "Did you see George?" Do you know anything about my Frank?" And then you brought out the letters and gave them the messages of which you had been the bearer. Do you suppose that angels of God, coming down to this awful battle-field of sin, and sorrow, and death, and meeting us and seeing us, and finding out all about us, carry back no message to the skies?

O, THERE IS CONSOLATION IN IT!

You are in present communication with that land. They are in sympathy with you now more than they ever were, and they are waiting for the moment when the hammer-stroke shall shatter the last claim of your earthly bondage and your soul shall spring upward; and they will stand on the heights of heaven and see you come; and when you are within hailing distance your other friends will be called out, and, as you flash through the pearl-hung gate, their shout will make the hills tremble: "Hail! ransomed spirit, to the city of the blessed."

I console you still further with the *idea of a resurrection*. I know there are a great many people who do not accept this because they cannot understand it; but, my friends, there are two stout passages—I could bring a hundred, but two swarthy passages are enough—and one David will strike down the largest Goliath. "Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming when all who are in their graves shall come forth." The other swarthy passage is this: "The Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout, and the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall arise first." Oh, there *will* be such a thing as a resurrection.

You ask me a great many questions I cannot answer about this resurrection. You say, for instance: "If a man's body is constantly changing, and every seventh year he has an entirely new body, and he lives on to seventy years of age, and so has had ten different bodies, and at the hour of his death there is not a particle of flesh within him that was there in the days of his childhood—in the resurrection, which of the ten bodies will come up, or will they all rise?" You say: "Suppose a man dies and his body is scattered in the dust, and out of that dust vegetables grow, and men eat the vegetables, and cannibals slay these men and eat them,

and cannibals fight with cannibals until at last there shall be a hundred men who shall have within them some particles that started from the dead body first named, coming up through the vegetable, through the first man who ate it, and through the cannibals who afterwards ate him, and there be more than a hundred men who have rights in the particles of that body—in the resurrection how can they be assorted when these particles belong to them all? Who will be all? You say: “There is a missionary buried in Greenwood, and when he was in China he had his arm amputated—in the resurrection, will that fragment of the body fly sixteen thousand miles to join the rest of the body?” You say: “Will it not be a very difficult thing for a spirit coming back in that day to find the myriad particles of its own body, when they may have been scattered by the winds or overlaid by whole generations of the dead—looking for the myriad particles of its own body, while there are a thousand million other spirits doing the same thing, and all the assortment to be made within one day?” You say: “If a hundred and fifty men go into a place of evening entertainment, and leave their hats and overcoats in the hall, when they come back it is almost impossible for them to get the right ones, or to get them without a great deal of perplexity. And yet you tell me that myriad myriads of spirits in the last day will come and find myriads, and myriads, and myriads of bodies.” Have you any more questions to ask? any more difficulties to suggest? any more mysteries?

BRING THEM ON!

Against a whole battalion of scepticism I will march these two champions: “Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming when all who are in their graves shall come forth.” “The Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout, and the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, and the dead in

Christ shall rise first." You see I stick to these two passages. Who art thou, oh fool, that thou repliest against God? Hath He promised, and shall He not do it? Hath He commanded, and shall He not bring it to pass? Have you not confidence in His omnipotence? If He could, in the first place, build my body, after it is torn down can He not build it again?

"Oh," you say: "I would believe that if you would explain it. I am not disposed to be sceptical, but explain how it can be done." My brother, you believe a great many things you cannot explain. You believe your mind acts on your body. Explain the process. This seed planted comes up a blue flower. Another seed planted comes up a yellow flower. Another seed planted comes up a white flower. Why? Why that wart on your finger? Tell me why some cows have horns, and other cows have no horns. Why, when two obstacles strike each other in the air, do you hear the percussion? What is the subtle energy that solves a solid in a crucible? What makes the notches on an oak-leaf different from any other kind of leaf? What makes this orange-blossom, on this platform, different from that rose? How can the almightiness which rides on the circles of the heaven, find room to turn its chariot on the tuft of a heliotrope? Explain these. Can you not do it? Then I will not explain the resurrection. You explain one half of the common mysteries of every-day life, and I will explain all the mysteries of the resurrection. You cannot answer me very plain questions in regard to ordinary affairs. I am not ashamed to say that I cannot explain God, and the judgment, and the resurrection. I simply accept them as facts, tremendous and infinite.

Before the resurrection takes place, everything will be silent. The mausoleums and the labyrinths silent. The graveyards silent. The cemetery silent, save from the clash-

ing of hoofs and the grinding of wheels as the last funeral procession comes in. No breath of air disturbing the dust where Persepolis stood, and Thebes, and Babylon. No winking of the eyelids long closed in darkness. No stirring of the feet that once bounded the hill-side. No opening of the hand that once plucked the flower out of the edge of the wild wood. No clutching of swords by the men who went down when Persia battled and Rome fell. Silence from ocean beach to mountain cliff, and from river to river. The sea singing the same old tune. The lakes hushed to sleep in the bosom of the same great hills. No hand disturbing the gate of the long-barred sepulchre. All the nations of the dead motionless in their winding-sheets. Up the side of the hills, down through the trough of the valleys, far out in the caverns across the fields, deep down into the coral places of the ocean depths where Leviathan sports with his fellows, — everywhere, layer above layer, height above height, depth below depth—dead! dead! dead! But in the twinkling of an eye, as quick as that, as the archangel's trumpet comes pealing, rolling, reverberating, crashing across continents and seas,

THE EARTH WILL GIVE ONE FEARFUL SHUDDER

and the door of the family vault, without being unlocked, will burst open; and all the graves of the dead will begin to throb and heave like the waves of the sea; and the mausoleum of princes will fall into the dust; and Ostend and Sebastopol, and Austerlitz and Gettysburgh, stalk forth in the lurid air; and the shipwrecked rise from the deep, their wet locks looming above the billow; and all the land and all the sea become one moving mass of life—all generations, all ages with upturned countenances,—some kindled with rapture and others blanched with despair, but gazing in one direction, upon one object, and that *the throne of resurrection!*



On that day you will get back your Christian dead. There is where the comfort comes in. They will come up with the same hand, and the same foot, and the same entire body; but with a perfect hand, and a perfect foot, and a perfect body; corruption having become incorruption, mortality having become immortality. And oh, the re-union; oh, the embrace after so long an absence. Comfort one another with these words.

While I present these thoughts this morning, does it not seem that heaven comes very near to us, as though our friends, whom we thought a great way off, are not in the distance but close by? You have sometimes come down to a river at night-fall, and you have been surprised how easily you could hear voices across that river. You shouted over to the other side of the river, and they shouted back. It is said that, when George Whitefield preached in Third-street, Philadelphia, one evening time, his voice was heard clear across to the New Jersey shore. When I was a little while chaplain in the army, I remember how at even-tide we could easily hear the voices of the pickets across the Potomac, just when they were using ordinary tones. And as we come to-day and stand by the river of Jordan that divides us from our friends who are gone, it seems to me we stand on one bank and they stand on the other, and it is only a narrow stream, and our voices go and their voices come. Hark! Hush! I hear distinctly what they say: "These are they who come out of great tribulation, and had their robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb." Still the voice comes across the water, and I hear: "We hunger no more, we thirst no more; neither shall the sun light on us, nor any heat, for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne leads us to living fountains of water, and God wipeth away all tears from our eyes." May God, by His infinite grace, soothe you with an omnipotent comfort.

## RUN FOR YOUR LIFE.

"Escape for thy life ; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain ; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed."—*Gen.* xix. 17.

FOR the most part, the lakes of the earth are the darlings of the mountains—their necks garlanded with wild flowers and their foreheads flashing in the sun ; but there is one lake loathsome and God-forsaken, and exiled from all that is beautiful. The modern traveller finds it. It lies down accursed ; no tinged shells adorn its banks ; no fish live in its stenchful waters. The waterfowl, for the most part, do not fly anywhere near its surface, and the bather comes up out of it encrusted with the salt and sick with the taste of the water. Bitter, briny, sulphurous, dark, it seems as if the shadows of past desolation chased each other across it, and the traveller, struck through with melancholy, hastens from its presence, perhaps taking a few pieces of nitre and sulphur to show the barrenness of the place. Where that lake now spreads out, thirteen cities once stood—among them Sodom. It would be unpardonable if, in this presence, I recounted the crimes of that city. Suffice it to say that the citizens were so bad they mobbed an angel that came down on an errand of mercy. Lot resolved to leave the city, but did not make much haste. He had miles to travel, and, at the rate at which he was going, death would have dashed upon him before he got to the mountains. And so the angel seizes him, pushes him on, pulls him out, urges him forward, crying, in the words of my text : "Escape for thy life ; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain ; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed." Well,

### THE FATAL DAY CAME.

The morning as bright as ever, perhaps ; the citizens, as usual, reckless, unclean, and blasphemous. What do they

care about their coming doom? There is no God, or if there be, who fears Him? Suddenly there is a flame in the sky, and the volcano rocks and upheaves the bitumen that underlies all that region of country, throwing it up to the surface, and this combustible material coming in the presence of the fire immediately ignites; and amid the falling flame, and the upheaving asphaltum, and the suffocating stench of the brimstone, and the bursting thunder, and the roaring, crackling, all-consuming hurricane of God's wrath, Sodom shrieked its last curse and died!

My friends, God hates sin just as much now as He did then, and it behoves you and it behoves me to leave our transgressions, and start, not with snail's pace, not with deliberate walk, but at the top of our speed, for rescue; the angel that helped Lot out of his trouble meantime taking us by the arm, and crying in our ears: "Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain: escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed." What is the sin that we must hasten from? Sin is just one thing. The legislature makes an enactment; a man offends against it, and he is incarcerated. You make a law in your household; your child wilfully disobeys, and punishment follows. God makes a law; we have all broken it, and hence we are all sinners; and in consequence of that sin we must be punished unless there be some pardon offered—unless there be some door of escape set before us. Blessed be God, there is one!

My text, in the first place, suggests *urgency on the part of all those who would induce people out of their sins*. Why was not the angel more polite? Why did not he coolly and formally invite Lot and his wife to leave that city? The angel, so far from that, seized hold of him, pulled him out, pushed him on with irresistible force. The angel was in earnest. Oh, does not the world, looking upon us and seeing our coldness, come to the conclusion that we do not

believe what we say? If unpardoned men were in such peril as the Bible says they are, and we believe it, would we be such precisionists, so cold, and stolid, and unemotional? Suppose a blind man were on a rail-track, and you saw a train coming, would you go up to him and say: "My dear friend, a machine commonly called a locomotive, invented by James Watt, is making very rapid revolutions towards the place where you are, and unless you change your course of pedestrianism, it will be soon decided which of the two is the stronger?" Would you do that? Ah no; men are not so stolid about temporal peril. You would cry: "*Get out of the way! The cars are coming!*" And yet when it is spiritual danger we use so much circumlocution, and so much caution, and come with so timid a tread towards the place where men are imperilled, that they actually don't believe we think there is peril, although there are spiritual and eternal disasters coming on in long trains, flying as swiftly as the hours, swiftly as the minutes, swiftly as the seconds, ready to crush for ever. If we realized it, would not we stamp our foot, and cry:

"MAN, IMMORTAL, LOOK OUT FOR ETERNITY!"

If there be no danger in rejecting Christ, we might as well drop our anxiety; but if there is danger, let us cry the alarm. The world knows at this day that we who profess the faith of Christ, standing in our prayer-meetings, Sunday-schools, and pulpits, act as if religion were a fiction. Oh for something of the urgency of the angel that came to Lot; not coolly discussing with him the chemical properties of the storm that was coming, but laying hold of him with both hands, pulling him on, pushing him out, and crying with an emphasis that must have sent him at the top of his speed: "Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed."

My subject also suggests that the mere *starting gives no security*. Lot had started out of the city, but he might have perished half-way before he got to the mountains. Men start for heaven, but do not always get there. If my house be burning, and I take a bucket of water and put out the flames in this, and that, and yonder room, while I leave the flames in another room, I might as well have wasted no strength and brought no buckets of water at all. The whole thing will be consumed. And if a man is only half saved, he is not saved at all. Ten thousand men start for the kingdom of Christ, but do not get there. They either start too late, or stop before they get there. The *Cambria* started for Scotland, but did not go into port. The *City of Boston* came out from Liverpool harbour with flags flying, but the ocean keeps the awful secret of its burial. There is such a thing as starting for a place and not getting there. There was not one inch of safety anywhere between Sodom and the mountain of refuge. Lot might as well have stayed in his own home, and perished there, as to have perished outside the city.

Last Sabbath night, there were men here who started for the kingdom. Have they got there? Let me say to all such as have not reached that place: there is no rock of shelter where you are; no promise of safety where you are; overtaken by the storm here, you perish. A man has been very sick, doctors have attended him carefully, and he comes up to life again, begins to walk out; but he takes a cold, has a relapse, and in twelve hours he is a dead man. There are men who have been almost cured of their sin; they begin to get well, the heavenly Physician stayed day after day by their soul, they had almost recovered, but not quite; there came on them a cold draught from the world, there came a relapse, and they were gone. I hear men saying in the audience: "Lord, I will believe, I will be a Chris-

tian." Will you, now? If not now, to-morrow will take you into the whirl of business and gaiety, and you may never think of these things again. There is a man who, forty years ago, became almost a Christian, but not quite. What would have become of the Prodigal Son if he had stopped half-way between the swine trough and his father's house? Why, he might better not have started, but stayed down where he was. The carrots that the swine eat are better than nothing at all. Oh, to have started for heaven and not to get there! If there are any in this house who are in this position I now describe, let me say that you are no more safe in this half-and-half experience than you were in the time before you began to think, and so I sound the tocsin: "Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed."

The text suggests further, that a man, after being persuaded out of sin, *sometimes looks back*. Lot's wife looked back and perished. Lot himself would have looked back had it not been for the warning of the text. It is very natural that they should. It was their home. All her friends were there; all his friends were there. We become attached to the city of our residence, notwithstanding all its sins. Still it was wrong for them to look back, God forbade it. But are there not persons in this day who start out of their sins yet look back wistfully for occasional indulgence? Here is a man who started for heaven a year ago. He had been given to dissipation; he has looked back. You are drinking too hard. I believe a moderate drinker may get into heaven, but a hard drinker, never! "No drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God." The snake catches the eye of the bird on the limb: it begins to tremble, and soon slips from the tree branch, and begins to fly down toward the serpent, and soon it is caught in the terrible folds and is gone. The wine cup has been your fascination. You have

by it been brought down from the circles in which you once moved, and come down nearer and nearer to the day of your destruction, and after awhile you will be caught in the coils of that which "biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder." *Oh, man, give up drinking, or give up heaven!* There is your choice. A man stood on the scaffold about to be executed, and the sheriff, pulling out his watch, said: "You have five minutes to say what you have to say." The dying man said: "Rum ruined me. I had a little brother. I loved him very much. He was a bright-eyed lad. I came home one day intoxicated. My little brother was picking berries in the garden, and for some reason I got mad at him, and I took up an iron rake and with one stroke I killed him. Now I am to die for it, and you ask me what I have to say. It is this: never, never, never touch anything that can intoxicate." Alas, if once you start for heaven and look back to your early dissipations!

Here is another who has made shipwreck in another direction: it has been the house of shame. That Sodom will be the eternal damnation of your soul unless you quit it. "As an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks; till a dart strike through his liver." So says God in Proverbs, shall be the doom of all the impure.

Another man is captured by *the convivialities of life*. He has chosen better associates, but says: "I guess I will go down to the room and see the boys a little while." He goes down, and is there one or two hours, and in those two hours he loses all his good resolutions and all serious impressions. They are witty, they are brilliant, they are smart there; but they are bad, and they ruined him. Oh, how many have started out of associates, and looked back. Oh, be not among them. "Escape for thy life."

My text suggests that some men, having started, *loiter by the way*. They tarry in the plain. They are too lazy to get

on. You know that men, in order to get on in this world, must deny themselves, and work hard ; must go through drudgery, that after awhile they may have luxuries. But there are some men too lazy for this life and too lazy to win heaven. If we get to heaven it will be by gathering up all the energies of our souls and hurling them ahead in one persistent direction. I have seen within the past week or two people in this church start for heaven, but

THEY LOITERED BY THE WAY,

so that ten thousand years would not be long enough for them to get there. In mid-ocean, on the *China* going out at midnight, the "screw" stopped. "What's the matter?" everybody cried. People rushed out to see why the "screw" had stopped in mid-ocean. Something wrong, or it would not stop in the middle of the Atlantic. So it is a bad sign when men voyaging towards heaven stop half-way. It is a sign of infinite peril.

I don't exactly know why Lot and his wife loitered by the way. I think Lot's wife looked back because she thought, after all, it might be a hoax—that there might be no destruction of the city, and she said to herself: "Wouldn't we feel silly if our property should be confiscated and the city stand undamaged?" Just so there are men now who say it is all talk about a judgment and a long eternity ; it is all a hoax. I don't wonder that a man says that who does not believe the Bible ; but if a man believe the Bible, I don't know how he can say that, because this Bible declares God will turn into hell all the nations that forget Him, and will sweep with the hail of His vengeance the refuges of lies. In the peroration of His Sermon on the Mount, Christ told how some houses are on the rock and stand, and other houses are on the sand and fall. Sodom must perish ; sin must be crushed, and the whole world acclaim the justice of God.



Perhaps Lot and his wife thought there was no hurry. They may have said : "There is no sign in the heaven ; there never was a more beautiful day than this. We suppose that when the time comes, there will be some sign of it. There will be a rumbling in the earth, or there will be an ominous shadow on the hills." They were mistaken. I suppose it came in an eye-twinkle. One moment mirth and song, the next volcanic eruption, and bursting cloud, and horrible obliteration. Men now tarry in the plain of sin and say : "There is no hurry. What if your breath should stop? Where would you be? Where would you go? I don't ask you to take my poor words about the brevity and uncertainty of life. Ask any commercial man whose kind of business necessitates that he calculate the length of human life—ask him in his business what he thinks of the uncertainty of human existence. "Oh," says some man : "I shall repent on my sick bed." Will you? The last sickness, as far as I have observed it, is generally divided into two parts. The first half of that final sickness is spent in the expectation of getting well, in the discussion of doctors and different styles of medicines ; the last half in delirium, or in stupidity, or a consternation which prohibits religious thought. So that I take it for granted that

#### THE POOREST PLACE ON EARTH

for a man to repent of sin and prepare for heaven, is on his death-bed. In the first half of that sickness he will expect to get well, and in the last half of it he will not be fit to think. What a foolish thing it is to tarry in the plain, when more people perish between Sodom and the mountains than actually perish inside the city. A gentleman was telling me, a night or two ago, walking up the street, of a lady who said : "I will repent and turn to God in six months. I have made up my mind deliberately to that, and when I make

up my mind I stick to it. In six months I mean to be a Christian." Three of the six months passed along, and one evening, at the expiration of the three months, she said to some one who was talking on serious subjects: "Just three months more and I will attend to it." The next morning they knocked at her door. She gave no answer. They went in. She had passed up to reckon with God. Oh, man immortal! woman immortal! tarry not in the plain. If it were a mere matter of temporal peril, I could not help but be interested in you. If I saw your house kindling with flame, I could not help but cry out: "Fire, fire!" If I saw you smitten with some terrible disease, I would run for medicament; but when I find it is the soul that is in disease and in peril, I feel like coming, and with almost a violence of earnestness crying: "Why will you die?"

Lot and his wife were in peril. If they stayed in the city, what would become of them? Would it be the loss of an arm, or foot, or eye? Oh, no; it would be death utter; and before the disasters passed from that city the people had perished in their homes, and in the streets. "Lest thou be consumed," the angel cried out. They who die in their sins are consumed; they are struck down with none to deliver.

Lot started for the mountains. He knew if he got there, all would be safe. The storm could not take him there, could not destroy him. Jesus Christ is the mountain of our refuge. His side is the cleft rock in which we may hide. To the mountains! to the mountains! No storm of death can chase you there. Everlastingly safe are all those who put their trust in Him. Oh, make haste! Tighten thy girdle for the race. Lay aside all impediments, and may God give the speed of lightning to thy feet! "Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed."

## SNOW WATER AND ALKALI INSUFFICIENT.

"If I wash myself with snow-water, and should I cleanse my hands in alkali, yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me."—*Job ix. 30, 31.*

**A**LBERT BARNES—honoured be his name on earth and in heaven—went straight back to the original writing of my text, and translated it as I have now quoted it, giving substantial reasons for so doing. Although we know better, the ancients had an idea that in snow-water there was a special power to cleanse, and that a garment washed and rinsed in it would be as clean as clean could be; but if the plain snow-water failed to do its work, then they would take lye, or alkali, and mix it with oil, and under that preparation they felt that the last impurity would certainly be gone. Job, in my text, in most forceful figure, sets forth the idea that all his attempts to make himself pure before God were a dead failure, and that unless we are ablated by something better than earthly liquids and chemical preparations, we are loathsome and in the ditch. "If I wash myself with snow-water, and should I cleanse my hands in alkali, yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me."

You are now sitting for your picture. I turn the camera obscura of God's Word full upon you, and I pray that the sunshine falling through the skylight may enable me to take you just as you are. Shall it be a flattering picture or shall it be a true one? You say: "Let it be a true one." The first profile that was ever taken was taken three hundred and thirty years before Christ, of Antigonus. He had a blind eye, and he compelled the artist to take his profile, so as to hide the defect in his vision. But since that invention, three hundred and thirty years before Christ, there have been a great many profiles. Shall I, to-night, give you a one-sided view of yourselves, a profile, or shall

it be a full-length portrait, showing you how you stand before heaven, and earth, and hell? If God will help me by His almighty grace, I shall give you that last kind of a picture.

When I first entered the ministry, I used to write my sermons all out and read them, and run my hand along the line lest I should lose my place. I have hundreds of those manuscripts. Shall I ever preach them? Never; for in those days I was somehow overmastered with the idea I heard talked all around about of the dignity of human nature, and I adopted the idea, and I evolved it, and I illustrated it, and I argued it; but coming on in life, and having seen more of the world, and studied better my Bible, I find that early teaching was faulty, and that there is

#### NO DIGNITY IN HUMAN NATURE

until it is reconstructed by the grace of God. Talk about vessels going to pieces on the Skerries, off Ireland! There never was such a shipwreck as in the Gihon and the Hiddekel, rivers of Eden, where our first parents foundered. Talk of a steamer going down with five hundred passengers on board! What is that to the shipwreck of twelve hundred million souls? We are by nature a mass of uncleanness and putrefaction, from which it takes all the omnipotence and infinitude of God's grace to extricate us. "If I wash myself with snow-water, and should I cleanse my hands in alkali, yet shalt Thou plunge me in the ditch, and my own clothes shall abhor me."

I remark, in the first place, that some people try to cleanse their soul of sin in the snow-water of *fine apologies*. Here is one man who says: "I am a sinner; I confess that; but I inherited this. My father was a sinner, my grandfather, my great-great-grandfather, and all the way back to Adam, and I couldn't help myself." My brother, have you not,

every day in your life, added something to the original estate of sin that was bequeathed to you? Are you not brave enough to confess that you have sometimes surrendered to sin which you ought to have conquered? I ask you whether it is fair play to put upon our ancestry things for which we ourselves are personally responsible? If your nature was askew when you got it, have you not sometimes given it an additional twist? Will all the tombstones of those who have preceded us make a barricade high enough for eternal defences? I know a devout man who had blasphemous parentage. I know an honest man whose father was a thief. I know a pure man whose mother was a waif of the street. The hereditary tide may be very strong, but there is such a thing as stemming it. The fact that I have a corrupt nature is no reason why I should yield to it. The deep stains of our soul can never be washed out by the snow-water of such insufficient apology.

Still further says some one: "If I have gone into sin, it has been through my companions, my comrades, and associates; they ruined me. They taught me to drink. They took me to the gambling hell. They plunged me into the house of sin. They ruined my soul." I do not believe it. God gave to no one the power to destroy you or me. If a man is destroyed he is self-destroyed, and that is always so. Why did you not break away from them? If they had tried to steal your purse, you would have knocked them down; if they had tried to purloin your gold watch, you would have riddled them with shot; but when they tried to steal your immortal soul, you placidly submitted to it.

Still further, some persons apologize for their sins by saying: "We are a great deal better than some people. You see people all around about us that are a great deal worse than we." You stand up columnar in your integrity, and look down upon those who are prostrate in their habits

and crimes. What of that, my brother? If I failed through recklessness and wicked imprudence for one thousand pounds, is the matter alleviated at all by the fact that somebody else has failed for one hundred thousand pounds, and somebody else for two hundred thousand pounds? Oh, no. If I have the neuralgia, shall I refuse medical attendance because my neighbour has virulent typhoid fever? The fact that his disease is worse than mine—does that cure mine? If I, through my foolhardiness, leap off into eternal woe, does it break the fall to know that others leap off a higher cliff into deeper darkness? When the Hudson River rail-train went through the bridge at Spuyten Duyvel, did it alleviate the matter at all that instead of two or three people being hurt there were seventy-five mangled and crushed? Because others are depraved, is that any excuse for my depravity? Am I better than they? Perhaps they had worse temptations than I have had. Perhaps their surroundings in life were more overpowering. Perhaps, oh man, if you had been under the same stress of temptation, instead of sitting here to-night, you would have been looking through the bars of a penitentiary. Perhaps, oh woman, if you had been under the same power of temptation, instead of sitting here to-night, you would be tramping the street, the laughing stock of men and the grief of the angels of God, dungeoned, body, mind, and soul, in the blackness of despair. Ah, do not let us solace ourselves with the thought that other people are worse than we. Perhaps in the future, when our fortunes may change, unless God prevents it, we may be worse than they are. Many a man after thirty years, after forty years, after fifty years, after sixty years, has gone to pieces on the sand-bars. Oh, instead of wasting our time in hyper-criticism about others, let us ask ourselves the questions, where *we* stand? what are *our* sins? what are *our* deficits?

what are *our* perils? what *our* hopes? Let each one say to himself: "Where will I be? Shall I range in summery fields, or grind in the mills of a great night? Shall it be anthem or shriek? Shall it be with God or fiends? Where? Where?" Some winter morning you go out and see a snowbank in graceful drifts, as though by some heavenly compass it had been curved, and, as the sun glints, its lustre is almost insufferable—and it seems as if God had wrapped the earth in a shroud with white plaits woven in looms celestial. And you say: "Was there ever anything so pure as the snow, so beautiful as the snow?" But you brought a pail of that snow and put it upon the stove, and melted it, and you found that there was a sediment at the bottom, and every drop of that snow-water was riled, and you found that the snow-bank had gathered up the impurity of the field, and that, after all, it was not fit to wash in. And so I say it will be if you try to gather up these contrasts and comparisons with others, and with these apologies attempt to wash out the sins of your heart and life. It will be an unsuccessful ablution. Such snow-water will never wash away a single stain of an immortal soul.

But I hear some one say: "I will try something better than that. I will try the force of a *good resolution*. That will be more pungent, more caustic, more extirpating, more cleansing. The snow-water has failed, and now I will try the alkali of a good, strong resolution." My dear brother, have you any idea that a resolution about the future will liquidate the past? Suppose I owed you a thousand pounds, and I should come to you to-morrow, and say: "Sir, I will never run in debt to you again; if I should live thirty years I will never run in debt to you again;" will you turn to me and say: "If you will not run in debt in the future I will forgive you the thousand pounds." Will you do that? No! nor will God. We have been running up a long score of

indebtedness with God. If for the future we should abstain from sin, that would be no defrayment of past indebtedness. Though you should live from this time forth pure as an archangel before the throne, that

WOULD NOT REDEEM THE PAST.

God, in the Bible, distinctly declares that He "will require that which is past,"—past opportunities, past neglects, past wicked words, past impure imaginations, past everything. The past is a great cemetery, and every day is buried in it. And here is a long row of three hundred and sixty-five graves. They are the dead days of 1873. Here is a long row of three hundred and sixty-five more graves, and they are the dead days of 1872. And here is a long row of three hundred and sixty-five more graves, and they are the dead days of 1871. It is a vast cemetery of the past. But God will rouse them all up with resurrectionary blast, and as the prisoner stands face to face with juror and judge, so you and I will have to come up and look upon those departed days face to face, exulting in their smile or cowering in their frown. "Murder will out" is a proverb that stops too short. Every sin, however small as well as great, will out. In hard times, years ago, it is authentically stated a manufacturer was on the way, with a bag of money, to pay off his hands. A man, infuriated with hunger, met him on the road, and took a rail with a nail in it from a paling fence, and struck him down, and the nail, entering the skull, instantly slew him. Thirty years after the murderer went back to that place. He passed into the graveyard, where the sexton was digging a grave, and while he stood there the spade of the sexton turned up a skull, and lo! the murderer saw a nail protruding from the back part of the skull, and as the sexton turned the skull it seemed with hollow eyes to glare on the murderer, and he, first petrified with horror, stood in



silence, but soon cried out: "Guilty! Guilty! O God!" The mystery of the crime was over. The man was tried and executed. My friends, all the unpardoned sins of our lives, though we may think they are buried out of sight and gone into a mere skeleton of memory, will turn up in the cemetery of the past, and glower upon us with their misdoings. I say all our unpardoned sins. Oh, have you done the preposterous thing of supposing that good resolutions for the future will wipe out the past. Good resolutions, though they may be pungent and caustic as alkali, have no power to neutralise a sin—have no power to wash away a transgression. It wants something more than earthly chemistry to do this. Yea, yea, though "I wash myself with snow-water, and should I cleanse my hands in alkali, yet shalt Thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me."

You see from the last part of this text that Job's idea of sin was very different from that of Lord Byron or Eugene Sue, or George Sand, or M. J. Michelet, or any of the hundreds of writers who have done up iniquity in mezzotint, and garlanded the wine cup with eglantine and rosemary, and made the path of the libertine end in bowers of ease instead of on the hot flagging of infernal torture. You see that Job thinks that

#### SIN IS NOT A FLOWERY PARTERRE:

that it is not a table-land of fine prospects; that it is not music, dulcimer, violoncello, castanet, and Pandean pipes, all making music together. No. He says it is a ditch, long, deep, loathsome, stenchful, and we are all plunged into it, and there we wallow, and sink, and struggle, not able to get out. Our robes of propriety and robes of worldly profession are saturated in the slime and abomination, and our soul, covered over with transgres-

sion, hates its covering, and the covering hates the soul, until we are plunged into the ditch, and our own clothes abhor us.

I know that some modern religionists caricature sorrow for sin, and they make out an easier path than the "pilgrim's progress" that John Bunyan dreamed of. The road they travel does not travel where John's did, at the City of Destruction, but at the gate of the university; and I am very certain that it will not come out where John's did, under the shining ramparts of the celestial city. No repentance; no pardon. If you do not, my brother, feel that you are down in the ditch, what do you want of Christ to lift you out? If you have no appreciation of the fact that you are astray, what do you want of Him who came to seek and save that which was lost? Yonder is the *Scotia*, the swiftest of the Cunarders, coming across the Atlantic. The wind is abaft, so that she has not only her engines at work, but all sails up. I am on board the *Spain*, of the National line. The boat-davits are swung around. The boat is lowered. I get into it with a red flag, and cross over to where the *Scotia* is coming, and I wave the flag. The captain looks off from the bridge, and says: "What do you want?" I reply: "I come to take some of your passengers across to the other vessel; I think they will be safer and happier there." The captain would look with indignation, and say: "Get out of the way, or I will run you down." And then I would back oars, amid the jeering of two or three hundred people looking over the taffrail. But the *Spain* and the *Scotia* meet under different circumstances after awhile. The *Scotia* is coming out of a cyclone; the life-boats all smashed; the bulwarks gone; the wheel off; the vessel rapidly going down. The boatswain gives his last whistle of despairing command. The passengers run up and down the deck, and some pray, and

all make a great outcry. The captain says: "You have about fifteen minutes now to prepare for the next world." "No hope!" sounds from stem to stern, and from the ratlines down to the cabin. I see the distress. I am let down by the side of the *Spain*.

I PUSH OFF AS FAST AS I CAN

towards the sinking *Scotia*. Before I come up, people are leaping into the water in their anxiety to get to the boat, and when I have swung up under the side of the *Scotia*, the frenzied passengers rush through the gangway until the officers, with axe, and clubs, and pistols, try to keep back the crowd, each wanting his turn to come next. There is but one life-boat, and they all want to get into it, and the cry is: "Me next! me next!" You see the application before I make it. As long as a man going on in his sin feels that all is well, that he is coming out at a beautiful port, and has all sail set, he wants no rescue; but if under the flash of God's convicting spirit he shall see that by reason of sin he is dismasted and water-logged, and going down into the trough of a sea where he cannot live, how soon he puts the sea-glass to his eye and sweeps the horizon, and at the first sign of help cries out: "I want to be saved. I want to be saved now. I want to be saved for ever." No sense of danger, no application for rescue.

Oh, that God's eternal spirit would flash upon us a sense of our sinfulness. The Bible tells the story in letters of fire, but we get used to it. We joke about sin. We make merry over it. What is sin? Is it a trifling thing? Sin is a vampire that is sucking out the life-blood of your immortal nature. Sin? It is a Bastille that no earthly key ever unlocked. Sin? It is expatriation from God and heaven. Sin? It is grand larceny against the Almighty, for the Bible asks the question: "Will a man rob God?" answering it in the

affirmative. This Gospel is a writ of replevin to recover property unlawfully detained from God.

The bell at the cemetery gate tolls. The procession goes through, and ropes are wrapped around the casket, and the casket lowered five or six feet; but the body inside the casket is no more dead than is every man until he has been regenerated by the grace of God. It is not I say so, but the Bible, which pronounces us *dead*, dead—in trespasses and sins. The maniac who puts around his brow a bunch of straw, and thinks it is a crown, and holds in his hand a stick, and thinks it is a sceptre, and gathers up some pebbles, and thinks they are diamonds, is no more beside himself than is every one who has not accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour; for the Bible, in the parable, intimates that every prodigal is beside himself, in phantasia, in delirium, in madness.

#### THE BIBLE IS NOT COMPLIMENTARY

in its language. It does not speak mincingly about our sins. It does not talk apologetically. There is no vermillion in its style. It does not cover up our transgressions with blooming metaphor. It does not sing about them in weak falsetto; but it thunders out: "The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth. Every one has gone back. He has altogether become filthy. He is abominable, and filthy, and drinketh in iniquity like water." And then the Lord Jesus Christ flings down at our feet this humiliating catalogue: "Out of the heart proceedeth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornication, theft, evil speaking, blasphemy." Oh there is a text for your rationalist to preach from. Oh the dignity of human nature! There is an element of your science of man that the anthropologist never has had the courage to touch, and the Bible, in all the ins and outs of the most forceful style, sets forth our natural pollution, and

represents iniquity as a frightful thing, as an exhausting thing, as a loathsome thing. It is not a mere bemiring of the feet, it is not a mere befouling of the hands, it is going down, head and ears under, in a ditch until our own clothes abhor us.

My brethren, shall we stay down where sin thrusts us? We cannot afford to. I have, to-night, to tell you that there is something purer than snow-water, something more pungent than alkali, and that is the blood of Jesus Christ that cleanseth from all sin. Aye, the river of salvation, bright, crystalline, and heaven-born, rushes though this audience with billowy tide, strong enough to wash your sins completely and for ever away. Oh Jesus, let the dam that holds it back now break, and the floods of salvation roll over us.

"Let the water and the blood,  
From thy side a healing flood,  
Be of sin the double cure,  
Save from wrath and make me pure."

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST BENDS OVER YOU

to-night, and offers you His right hand, proposing to lift you up, first making you whiter than snow, and then raising you to glories that never die. "Billy," said a Christian bootblack to another, "when we come up to heaven, it won't make any difference that we've been bootblacks here, for we shall get in, not somehow or other, but, Billy, we shall get straight through the gate." Oh, if you only knew how full, and free, and tender is the offer of Christ, this night you would all take Him without one single exception; and if all the doors of this house were locked save one, and you were compelled to make egress by only one door, and I stood there and questioned you, and the Gospel of Christ had made the right impression upon your heart to-night, you would answer me as you went out, one and all: "Jesus is mine, and I am His." Oh that this might be the night when you would receive Him.

## THE CHRISTIAN AT THE BALLOT-BOX.

"Some therefore cried one thing, and some another : for the assembly was confused ; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together. And they drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And Alexander beckoned with the hand, and would have made his defence unto the people. But when they knew that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out : Great is Diana of the Ephesians."—*Acts xix.* 32, 33, 34.

**E**PHESUS was upside down. A manufacturer of silver boxes for holding heathen images had called his labourers together to discuss the behaviour of one Paul, who had been in public places assaulting image worship, and consequently very much damaging that particular business. There was great excitement in the city. People stood in knots along the streets, violently gesticulating and calling each other hard names. Some of the people favoured the policy of the silversmith ; other people favoured the policy of Paul. There were great moral questions involved ; but these did not bother them at all. The only question about which they seemed to be interested was concerning the wages and the salaried positions. The silversmith and his compeers had put up factories at great expense for the making of these silver boxes, and now, if this new policy is to be inaugurated, the business will go down, the labourers will be thrown out of employment, and the whole city will suffer. Well, what is to be done ? "Call a convention," says some one ; for in all ages a convention has been a panacea for public evils. The convention is called, and as they want the largest room in the city, they take the theatre. Having there assembled, they all want to get the floor, and they all want to talk at once. You know what excitement that always makes in a convention where a great many people want to talk at once. Some cried one thing, some cried another. Some wanted to denounce, some wanted to resolve. After awhile a prominent man gets the floor, and

he begins to speak ; but they very soon hiss him down, and then the confusion rises into worse uproar, and they begin to shout, all of them together, and they keep on until they are red in the face and hoarse in the throat, for two long hours crying out : " Great is Diana of the Ephesians ! Great is Diana of the Ephesians ! "

That whole scene reminds me of the excitement we have almost every autumn at the elections. While that goddess Diana has lost her worshippers, and her temples have gone into the dust, the American people want to set up a god in place of it, and they want us all to bow down before it ; and that god is Political Party. Considering our superior civilization, I have to declare to you that the Ephesian idolatry was

#### LESS OFFENSIVE IN THE SIGHT OF GOD

than is this all-absorbing American partizanship. While there are honest men, true men, Christian men, who stand in both political parties, and who come into the autumnal elections resolving to serve their city, or their state, or the nation in the best possible way, I have noticed also that with many it is a mere contest between the ins and the outs—those who are in trying to stay in and keep the outs out, and those who are out trying to get in and thrust the ins out. And one party cries : " Great is Diana of the Ephesians ! " and the other party cries : " Great is Diana of the Ephesians ! " neither of them honest enough to say : " Great is my pocket-book ! "

Once or twice a year it is my custom to talk to the people about public affairs from what I call a Christian standpoint, and this morning I have chosen for that duty. I hope to say a practical word. History tells us of a sermon once preached amid the highlands of Scotland—a sermon two hours long—on the sin of luxury, where there were not more

than three pairs of shoes in the audience: and during our last war a good man went into a hospital distributing tracts, and gave a tract on "The Sin of Dancing" to a man whose both legs had been amputated! But I hope this morning to present an appropriate and adapted word, as next Tuesday, at the ballot-box, great affairs are to be settled. The Rev. Dr. Emmons, in the early history of our country, in Massachusetts, preached about the election of Thomas Jefferson to the presidency. The Rev. Dr. Mayhew, of Boston, in the early days of our republic, preached about the repeal of the Stamp Act. There are times when ministers of Christ must look off upon public affairs and discuss them. We need go back to no example. Every man is, before God, responsible for his own duty. If the Norwegian boasts of his home of rocks, and the Siberian is pleased with his land of perpetual snow; if the Roman thought that the muddy Tiber was the favoured river in the sight of heaven, and if the Laplander shivers out his eulogy of his native clime; and if the Chinese have pity for anybody born outside the flowery kingdom, shall not we, born under these fair skies, and standing day by day amid these glorious civil and religious liberties, be public-spirited? I propose to tell the people very plainly what I consider to be their Christian duty at the ballot-box.

First: *Set yourselves against all political falsehood.* The most monstrous lies ever told in this country are during the elections. I stop at the door of a Democratic meeting and listen, and hear that the Republicans are thieves. I stop at the door of a Republican meeting and listen, and hear that the Democrats are scoundrels. Our public men are microscopized, and the truth distorted.

#### WHO BELIEVES A TENTH PART

of what he reads or hears in the autumnal elections? Men who, at other seasons of the year, are more careful in their



speech, become pedlars of scandal. In the far east there is a place where, once a year, they let the people do as they please and say what they please, and the place is full of uproar, misrule, and wickedness, and they call it the "Devil's day." The nearest approximation to that in this country has been the first Tuesday in November. The community at such times seems to say: "Go to, now; let us have a good time at lying." Prominent candidates for office are denounced as renegade and inebriate. A small lie will start in the corner of a country newspaper, and keep on running until it has captured the printing-presses of the whole continent. What garbling of speeches! What misinterpretation of motives! What misrepresentation of individual antecedents! To capture the unwary, you shall have a ticket with a Democratic heading and Republican names following, and then a Republican heading with Democratic names following, and the poor man will stand at the polls bewildered; at last, perhaps, voting for those whom he has been three weeks vociferously denouncing. Oh, Christian men, frown upon this political falsehood. Remember that a political lie is as black as any other kind of a lie. God has recorded all the falsehoods that have been told at the city, state, or national elections since the foundation of this government, and, though the perpetrators and their victims may have gone into the dust, in the last day judgment will be awarded. The falsehoods that Aaron Burr breathed into the ear of Blennerhasset, the slanders that Lieut.-Gen. Gage proclaimed about George Washington, the misrepresentations in regard to James Monroe, are as fresh on God's Book to-day as the lie that was printed last week about Samuel J. Tilden or Governor Dix. And all liars shall have their place in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

*Again: I counsel you as Christian men to set yourselves*

*against the misuse of money in political campaigns.* Of the tens of thousands of dollars already spent this autumn, how much of the amount do you suppose has been properly used? You have a right to spend money for the publishing of political tracts, for the establishment of organizations for the carrying out of what you consider to be the best; you have a right to appeal to the reason of men, by argument and statistics, and by facts; but he who puts a bribe into the hand of a voter, or plies weak men with mercenary and corrupt motives,

#### COMMITTS A SIN AGAINST GOD

and the nation. Bribery is one of the most appalling sins of this country. God says: "Fires shall consume the tabernacles of bribery." Have nothing to do with such a sin, O Christian man! Fling it from the ballot-box. Hand over to the police the man who attempts to tamper with your vote, and remember that elections that cannot be carried without bribes ought never to be carried at all.

Again: *I ask you as Christian men to set yourselves against the dissipations that hover over the ballot-box.* Let me say that no man can afford to go into political life who is not a teetotaller. Hot political discussion somehow creates an unnatural thirst, and hundreds of thousands of men have gone down into drunkenness through political life. After an exciting canvass through the evening you must "take something," and rising in the morning with less animation than usual you must "take something," and going off among your comrades through the forenoon you meet political friends and you must "take something," and in the afternoon you meet other political friends and you must "take something," and before night has come something has taken you. There are but few cases where men have been able to stand up against the dissipations of political life. Joseph

was a politician, but he maintained his integrity. Daniel was a politician, but he was a teetotaler to the last. Abraham was a politician, but he was always characterized as the father of the faithful.

MOSES WAS A POLITICIAN ;

the grandest of them ; but he honoured God more than he did the Pharaohs. And there are hundreds of Christian men now in the political parties maintaining their integrity, even when they are obliged to stand amid the blasted, lecherous, and loathsome crew that sometimes surround the ballot-box ; these Christian men doing their political duty, and then coming back to the prayer-meetings and Christian circles as pure as when they went out. But that is not the ordinary circumstance ; that is the exception. How often you see men coming back from the political conflict, and their eye is glazed, and their cheek has an unnatural flush, and they talk louder than they usually do, and at the least provocation they will bet, and you say they are convivial or they are exceedingly vivacious, or you apply some other sweet name to them ; but God knows they are drunk ! Some of you, a month or six weeks ago, had no more religion than you ought to have, and after the elections are over, to calculate how much religion you have left will be a sum in vulgar fractions. Oh, the pressure is tremendous.

How many mighty intellects have gone down under the dissipation of politics. I think of one who came from the West. He was able to stand out against the whole American Senate. God had given him faculties enough to govern a kingdom, or to frame a constitution. His voice was terrible to his country's enemies, and a mighty inspiration in the day of national peril. He was in a fair way to become our president ; but twenty glasses of strong drink a day were his usual allowance, and he went down into the habits of a

confirmed inebriate. Alas for him. Though a costly monument has been reared over his resting-place, and though in the presence of the laying of the corner-stone there stood military and ecclesiastical dignitaries, the young men of this country shall not be denied the lawful lesson that the agency by which the world was robbed of one of its mightiest intellects, and our country of one of its ablest constitutional defenders, was the dissipation of political life. You want to know who I mean? Young man, ask your father when you get home. Oh the adverse tide is fearful, and I warn you against it.

You need not go far off to find the worn-out politician. Here he is stumbling along the highway, his limbs hardly able to hold him up. Bent over and pale with exhausting sicknesses. Surly to anybody who accosts him. His last decent article of apparel pawned for strong drink. Glad if, when going by a grocery, some low acquaintance invites him in to take a sip of ale, and then wiping his lip with his greasy sleeve,

#### KICKED OFF THE STEPS

by men who once were proud to be his constituents. Manhood obliterated. Lip blistered with a curse. Scars of brutal assault on cheek and brow. Foul-mouthed. A crouching, staggering, wheezing wretch. No friends. No God. No hope. No heaven. That is your worn-out politician. That is what some of you will become unless by this morning's warning, and the mercy of God, your steps are arrested. Oh, there are no words enough potent, enough consuming, enough damning to describe the horrible drunkenness that has rolled over this land, and that has bent down the necks of some of the mightiest intellects until they have been compelled to drink out of the trough of bestiality and abomination. I warn young men against political life unless they are teetotalers and consecrated Christian men.

Again : *I counsel you that when you go to the ballot-box at the city, or the state or the national elections, you recognise God and appeal to Him for His blessing.* There is a power higher than the ballot-box, than the gubernatorial chair, than the presidential White House. It is high time that we put less confidence in political platforms and more confidence in God. See what a weak thing is human foresight. How little our wise men seem to know. See how, every autumn, thousands of men who are clambering up for higher positions are turned under. God upsets them. Every man, every party, every nation, has a mission to perform. Failing to perform it, down he goes, down it goes. God said to the House of Bourbon : "Remodel France and establish equity." House of Bourbon would not do it. Down it went. God said to the House of Stuart : "Make the English people free, God-fearing, and happy." House of Stuart would not do it. Down it went. God said to the House of Hapsburg : "Rule Austria in righteousness, and open the prison houses until the captives shall go free." House of Hapsburg refuses to do it. Down it goes. God says to the political parties in this day : "By the principles of Christianity, remodel, govern, educate, save the people." Failing to do that, down they go, burying in their ruins their disciples and advocates. God can spare all the political intriguers of this day, and can raise up another generation who shall do justice and love mercy. If God could spare Luther before the Reformation was done, and if He could spare Washington before free government had been fully tested, and if He could spare Howard before more than one out of a thousand dungeons had been alleviated, and if He could spare Robert McCheyne just as Scotland was gathering to his burning utterances, and if He could spare Thomas Clarkson while yet millions of his fellow men had chains rusting to the bone, then

## HE CAN SPARE ANY MAN,

and He can spare any party. That man, who through cowardice or blind idolatry of party forsakes the cause of righteousness, goes down, and the armed battalions of God march over him.

Oh, Christian men, take out your Bible this afternoon, and in the light of that Word, make up your mind as to what is your duty as citizens. Remember that the highest kind of a patriot is a Christian patriot. Consecrate yourselves first to God, then you will know how to consecrate yourselves to your country. All these political excitements will be gone. Ballot-boxes and gubernatorial chairs and continents will smoke in the final conflagration; but those who love God and do their best, shall come to lustrous dominion after the stars have ceased their shining, and the ocean has heaved its last billow, and the closing thunder of the judgment-day shall toll at the funeral of a world! Oh, prepare for that day! Next Tuesday questions of the State will be settled; but there comes a day when the questions of eternity will be decided. You may vote right and may get the victory at the ballot-box, and yet suffer eternal defeat. After you have cast your last vote, where will you go to? In this country there are two parties. You belong to the one or the other of them. Likewise in eternity there will be two parties, and only two. "These shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal." To which party will you belong? God grant that, while you look after the welfare of the land in which God has graciously cast your lot, you may not forget to look after your soul—blood-bought, judgment-bound, immortal! God save the people!

## OUT OF THE IVORY PALACES.

"All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces."—*Psalms* xlv. 8.

**A**MONG the grand adornments of the city of Paris is the church of Notre Dame, with its great towers, and elaborate rose-windows, and sculpturing of the last judgment, with the trumpeting angels and rising dead; its battlements of quatrefoil; its sacristy, with ribbed ceiling and statues of saints. But there was nothing in all that building which more vividly appealed to my plain republican tastes than the costly vestments which laid in oaken presses, robes that had been embroidered with gold and been worn by popes and archbishops on great occasions. There was a robe in which Pius VII. had appeared at the crowning of the first Napoleon. There was also a vestment that had been worn at the baptism of Napoleon II. As our guide opened the oaken presses and brought out these vestments of fabulous cost, and lifted them up, the fragrance of the pungent aromatics in which they had been preserved filled the place with a sweetness that was almost oppressive. Nothing that had been done in stone more vividly impressed me than these things that had been done in cloth, and embroidery, and perfume.

But now, my friends, I open the drawer of this text, and I look upon the kingly robes of Christ; and as I lift them, flashing with eternal jewels, the whole house is filled with the aroma of these garments, which "smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces."

In my text the King steps forth; His robes rustle and blaze as He advances. His pomp, and power, and glory, overmaster the spectator. More brilliant is He than Queen Vashti moving amid the Persian princesses; than Marie Antoinette on the day when Louis XVI. put upon her the

necklace of eight hundred gems; than Anne Boleyn the day when Henry VIII. welcomed her to his palace. All beauty and all pomp forgotten, while we stand in the presence of this imperial glory. King of Zion. King of earth. King of heaven. King for ever! His garments not worn out, not dust bedraggled, but radiant, and jewelled, and redolent. It seems as if they must have been pressed a hundred years amid the flowers of heaven. The wardrobes from which they have been taken must have been sweet with clusters of camphire and frankincense, and all manner of precious wood. Do you not inhale the odours? Aye, aye. They "smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces."

Your first curiosity to-night is to *know why the robes of Christ are odorous with myrrh*. This was a bright-leaved Abyssinian plant. It was tri-foliated. The Greeks, Egyptians, Romans, and Jews bought and sold it at a high price. The first present that was ever given to Christ was a sprig of myrrh, thrown on His infantile bed in Bethlehem; and the last gift that Christ ever had was myrrh pressed into the cup of His crucifixion. The natives would take a stone and bruise the tree, and then there would exude a gum that would saturate all the ground beneath. This gum was used for purposes of merchandise. One piece of it, no longer than a chesnut, would whelm a whole room with odours. It was put in closets, in chests, in drawers, in rooms, and its perfume adhered almost interminably to anything that was anywhere near it. So, when in my text I read that Christ's garments smell of myrrh, I immediately conclude the exquisite sweetness of Jesus. I know that to many He is only like any historical person. Another John Howard. Another Frederick Oberland. Another Confucius. A

#### GRAND SUBJECT FOR A PAINTING.

A heroic theme for a poem. A beautiful form for a statue.



But to those who have heard His voice, and felt His pardon, and received His benediction, He is music, and light, and warmth, and thrill, and eternal fragrance. Sweet as a friend sticking to you when all else betray. Lifting you up while others try to push you down. Not so much like morning-glories, that bloom only when the sun is coming up, nor like "four-o'clocks," that bloom only when the sun is going down; but like myrrh, perpetually aromatic; the same morning, noon, and night, yesterday, to-day, for ever. It seems as if we cannot wear Him out. We put on Him all our burdens, and afflict Him with all our griefs, and set Him foremost in all our battles, and yet He is ready to lift, and to sympathize, and to help. We have so imposed upon Him, that one would think in eternal affront He would quit our souls; and yet to-night He addresses us with the same tenderness, dawns upon us with the same smile, pities us with the same compassion. There is no name like His for us. It is more imperial than Cæsar's, more musical than Beethoven's, more conquering than Charlemagne's, more eloquent than Cicero's. It throbs with all life. It weeps with all pathos. It groans with all pain. It stoops with all condescension. It breathes with all perfume. Who like Jesus to set a broken bone, to pity a houseless orphan, to nurse a sick man, to take a prodigal back without any scolding, to illumine a cemetery all ploughed with graves, to make a queen unto God out of the lost woman of the street, to catch the tears of human sorrow in a lachrymal that shall never be broken? Who has such an eye to see our need, such a lip to kiss away our sorrow, such a hand to snatch us out of the fire, such a foot to trample our enemies, such a heart to embrace all our necessities? I struggle for some metaphor with which to express Him. He is not like the bursting forth of a full orchestra; that is too loud. He is not like the sea when lashed to rage by the tempest; that

is too boisterous. He is not like the mountain, its brow wreathed with the lightnings; that is too solitary. Give us a softer type, a gentler comparison. We have seemed to see Him with our eyes, and to hear Him with our ears, and to touch Him with our hands. Oh that to-night He might appear to some other one of our five senses. Aye, the nostril shall discover His presence. He comes upon us like spice gales from heaven. Yea, His garments smell of pungent, lasting, and all pervasive myrrh.

Oh that you all knew His sweetness! How soon you would turn from your revels. If the philosopher leaped out of his bath in a frenzy of joy, and clapped his hands, and rushed through the streets because he had found the solution of a mathematical problem, how will you feel, leaping from the fountain of a Saviour's mercy and pardon, washed clean and made white as snow, when the question has been solved: "How can my soul be saved?" Naked, frost-bitten, storm-lashed soul, let Jesus this night throw around thee the "garments that smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces."

Your second curiosity is to know *why the robes of Jesus are odorous with aloes*. There is some difference of opinion about where these aloes grew, what is the colour of the flower, what is the particular appearance of the herb. Suffice it for you and me to know that aloes mean bitterness all the world over; and when Christ comes with garments bearing that particular odour, they suggest to me

#### THE BITTERNESS OF A SAVIOUR'S SUFFERING.

Were there ever such nights as Jesus lived through—nights on the mountain, nights on the sea, nights in the desert? Who ever had such a hard reception as Jesus had? A. hostility the first, an unjust trial in *oyer* and *terminer* another, a foul-mouthed, yelling mob the last. Was there

a space on His back as wide as your two fingers where He was not whipped? Was there a space on His brow an inch square where He was not cut by the briers? When the spike struck at the instep, did it not go clear through to the hollow of the foot? Oh, long, deep, bitter pilgrimage! Aloes! aloes!

John leaned his head on Christ; but who did Christ lean on? Five thousand men fed by the Saviour; who fed Jesus? The sympathy of a Saviour's heart going out to the leper and the adulteress; but who soothed Christ? Denied both cradle and death-bed, He had a fit place neither to be born nor to die. A poor babe, a poor lad, a poor young man! Not so much as a taper to cheer his dying hours; even the candle of the sun snuffed out. Oh, was it not all aloes? Our sins, sorrows, bereavements, losses, and all the agonies of earth and hell picked up as in one cluster and squeezed into one cup, and that pressed to His lip until the acrid, nauseating, bitter draught was swallowed with a distorted countenance and a shudder from head to foot, and a gurgling strangulation. Aloes, aloes! Nothing but aloes!

All this for Himself? All this to get the fame in the world of being a martyr? All this in a spirit of stubbornness, because He did not like Augustus? No, no. All this because He wanted to pluck you and me from hell. Because He wanted to raise you and me to heaven. Because we were lost, and He wanted us found. Because we were blind, and He wanted us to see. Because we were serfs, and He wanted us manumitted. Oh ye in whose cup of life the saccharine has predominated; oh ye who have had bright and sparkling beverages, how do you feel towards Him who in your stead, and to purchase your disenthralment, took the aloes, the unsavoury aloes, the bitter aloes?

Your third curiosity is to know why these garments of Christ are odorous with cassia. This was a plant that grew in India

and the adjoining islands. You do not care to hear what kind of a flower it had or what kind of a stalk. It is enough for me to tell you that it was used medicinally. In that land and in that age, where they knew but little about pharmacy, cassia was used to arrest many forms of disease. So when in my text we find Christ coming with garments that smell of cassia, it suggests to me the healing and curative power of the Son of God. "Oh," you say, "now you have a superfluous idea. We are not sick. Why do we want cassia? We are athletic. Our respiration is perfect. Our limbs are lithe, and in these autumnal days we feel we could bound like the roe." I beg to differ, my brother, from you. None of you can be better in physical health than I am, and yet I must say we are all sick. I have taken the diagnosis of your case, and have examined all the best authorities on the subject, and I come now to tell you that you are full of wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores, which have not been bound up or mollified with ointment. The marasmus of sin is on us—the palsy, the dropsy, the leprosy. The man that is expiring to-night in Fulton-street, the allopathic and homœopathic doctors having given him up, and his friends now standing around to take his last words, is no more certainly dying as to his body than you and I are dying, unless we have taken the medicine from God's apothecary. All the leaves of this Bible are only so many prescriptions from the Divine Physician, written, not in Latin, like the prescriptions of earthly physicians, but written in plain English, so that a man, though a fool, need not err therein. Thank God that the Saviour's garments smell of cassia. If you have not taken this healing medicine of the Gospel,

**YOU ARE DYING A DEATH**

which will not, perhaps, put your body into the cemetery just

now, but you are dying a death which will leave the soul in a grave whose headstone is inscribed with this epitaph: "In Memoriam: Here lies a man who missed heaven. This is the second death. Born some years ago on earth; died last night in eternity."

"There is a death whose pang  
Outlasts the fleeting breath;  
Oh, what eternal horrors hang  
Around the second death!"

Suppose a man were sick, and there was a phial on his mantel-piece with medicine he knew could cure him, and he refused to take it. What would you say of him? He is a suicide. And what do you say of that man who to-night, sick in sin, has the healing medicine of God's grace offered him and refuses to take it? If he dies, he is a suicide. People talk as though God took a man and led him out to darkness and death; as though He brought him up to the cliffs and then pushed him off. Oh, no. When a man is lost it is not because God pushed him off; it is because he jumps off. In olden times a suicide was buried at the cross-roads, and the people were accustomed to throw stones upon his grave. So it seems to me there may be in this house to-night a man who is destroying his own soul, and as though the angels of God were here to bury him at the point where the roads of life and death cross each other, throwing upon the grave the broken law and a great pile of misimproved privileges, so that those going by may look at the fearful mound and learn what a suicide it is when an immortal soul, for which Jesus died, puts itself out of the way.

When Christ trod this planet with foot of flesh, the people rushed after Him—people who were sick, and those who, being so sick they could not walk, were brought by their friends. Here I see a mother holding up her little child, and saying: "Cure this croup, Lord Jesus. Cure this scarlet

fever." And others saying: "Cure this ophthalmia. Give ease and rest to this spinal distress. Straighten this club foot." Christ made every house where He stopped a dispensary. I do not believe that in the nineteen centuries that have gone by since then, His heart has got hard. I feel that we can come to-night, with all our wounds of soul, and get His benediction. Oh Jesus, here we are. We want healing. We want sight. We want health. We want life. The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. Blessed be God that Jesus Christ comes through this assemblage now, His "garments smelling of myrrh" — that means fragrance—"and aloes"—they mean bitter sacrificial memories—"and cassia"—that means medicine and cure; and according to my text, He comes "out of the ivory palaces."

You know, or if you do not know I will tell you now, that some of the palaces of olden times were adorned with ivory. Ahab and Solomon had their homes furnished with it. The tusks of African and Asiatic elephants were twisted into all manner of shapes, and there were stairs of ivory and chairs of ivory, and tables of ivory, and floors of ivory, and pillars of ivory, and windows of ivory, and fountains that dropped into basins of ivory, and rooms that had ceilings of ivory. Oh, white and overmastering beauty. Green tree branches sweeping the white curbs. Tapestry trailing the snowy floors. Brackets of light flashing on the lustrous surroundings. Silvery music rippling to the beach of the arches. The mere thought of it almost stuns my brain, and you say: "Oh, if I could only have walked over such floors! If I could have thrown myself in such a chair! If I could have heard the drip and dash of those fountains!"

YOU SHALL HAVE SOMETHING BETTER THAN THAT

if you only let Christ introduce you. From that place He

came, and to that place He proposes to transport you ; for His "garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, *out of the ivory palaces.*"

Oh, what a place heaven must be ! The Tuilleries of the French, the Windsor Castle of the English, the Spanish Alhambra, the Russian Kremlin, are dungeons compared with it. Not so many castles on either side the Rhine as are ivory palaces on both sides of the river of God. One for the angels, insufferably bright, winged, fire-eyed, tempest-charioted. One for the martyrs, with blood-red robes from under the altar. One for the King, the steps of His palace the crowns of the Church Militant. One for the singers who lead the one hundred and forty and four thousand. One for you, ransomed from sin. One for me, plucked from the burnings. Oh, the ivory palaces !

To-night it seems to me as if the windows of those palaces were illumined for some great victory, and I look in and see climbing the stairs of ivory, and walking the floors of ivory, and looking from the windows of ivory, some whom we knew and loved on earth. Yes, I know them. There are father and mother, not eighty-two years and seventy-nine years, as when they left us, but blithe and young as on their marriage day. And there are brothers and sisters, merrier than when we used to romp across the meadows together. The cough gone. The cancer cured. The erysipelas healed. The heart-break over. Oh, how fair they are in the ivory palaces ! And your dear little children that went out from you ; Christ did not let one of them drop as He lifted them. He did not wrench them from you. No ; they went as from one they loved well to One whom they loved better. If I should take your little child and press its soft face against my rough cheek, I might keep it a little while ; but when you, the mother, came along, it would struggle to go with you. And so you sat holding your dying child when Jesus passed

by in the room, and the little one sprang out to greet Him. That is all. Your Christian dead did not go down into the dust, and the gravel, and the mud. Though it rained all that funeral day, and the water came up to the wheel's hub as you drove out to the cemetery, it made no difference to them, for they stepped from the home here to the home there, right into the ivory palaces. All is well with them. All is well.

When I was thinking out this sermon, and had got to about this point, there was a knock at my door, and I received a telegram from a very dear ministerial friend. It read: "My wife just died. Funeral next Tuesday. Will you be one of the pall-bearers?" I telegraphed immediately: "I will." Who could hold back at such a time? I knew I could carry my part of the burden. It is not a dead weight that you lift when you carry a Christian out. Jesus makes the bed up soft with velvet promises, and He says: "Put her down here very gently. Put that head, which will never ache again, on this pillow of hallelujahs. Send up word that the procession is coming. Ring the bells. Ring! Open your gates, ye ivory palaces." And so your loved ones are there. They are just as certainly there, having died in Christ, as that you are here. There is only one thing more they want. Indeed, there is one thing in heaven they have not got. They want it. What is it? Your company. But oh, my brother,

UNLESS YOU CHANGE YOUR TACK

you cannot reach that harbour. You might as well take the Baltimore and Ohio railroad, expecting in that direction to reach Toronto, as to go in the way some of you are going, and yet expect to reach the ivory palaces. Your loved ones are looking out of the windows of heaven to-night, and yet you seem to turn your back upon them. You do not seem



to know the sound of their voices as well as you used to, or be moved by the sight of their dear faces. Call louder, ye departed ones! Call louder from the ivory palaces!

When I think of that place, and think of my entering it, I feel awkward; I feel as sometimes when I have been exposed to the weather, and my shoes have been bemired, and my coat is soiled, and my hair is dishevelled, and I stop in front of some fine residence where I have an errand; I feel not fit to go in as I am, and sit among polished guests. So some of us feel about heaven. We need to be washed, we need to be rehabilitated before we go into the ivory palaces. Eternal God, let the surges of Thy pardoning mercy roll over us! I want not only to wash my hands and my feet, but, like some skilful diver standing on the pier-head, who leaps into the wave and comes up at a far-distant point from where he went in, so I want to go down, and so I want to come up. O Jesus, wash me in the waves of Thy salvation!

And here I ask you to solve a mystery that has been oppressing me for twenty-five years. I have asked it of doctors of divinity who have been studying theology half a century, and they have given me no satisfactory answer. I have turned over all the books in my library, but got no solution to the question, and to-night I come and ask you for an explanation. By what logic was Christ induced to exchange the ivory palaces of heaven for the crucifixion agonies of earth? I shall take the first thousand million years in heaven to study out that problem. Meanwhile and now, taking it as the tenderest and mightiest of all facts that Christ did come; that He came with spikes in His feet, came with thorns in His brow, came with spears in His heart, to save you and to save me. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

O Christ! whelm this audience with Thy compassion! Mow them down like summer grain with the harvesting sickle of Thy grace! Ride through, to-night, the conqueror, "Thy garments smelling of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces."

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### A BASKET OF SUMMER FRUIT.

"And He said, Amos, what seest thou? And I said, a basket of summer fruit."—*Amos* viii. 2.

A STOUT-CHESTED, swarthy-limbed, brave-hearted man was called out to rebuke Israel. His name was Amos. He had been brought up amid sheep and cattle, and in addition to his occupation of herdsman, he had the business of gathering sycamore-fruit—a very difficult business, because, if the fruit were not properly ripened, and just before its maturing it were not punctured with the teeth of an iron comb, then the fruit would be bitter and thoroughly unpalatable. Having always lived in the country, when Amos comes to write or to speak, his allusions are rural—full of threshing-floors, and sheaf-laden carts, and grass-hoppers, and mowings, and orchards, and vineyards, and, in my text: "a basket of summer fruit." Just what kind of fruit this was I do not know, whether sycamore-fruit, or pomegranates, or figs; but I do know that God meant for Israel, and means to-night for us, the truth that spiritual blessing, like summer fruit, must be used immediately, or it will perish.

Last week I saw farmers out on Long Island gathering their winter apples; and if these apples are carefully put away, they will last until next spring. You know there are pears which are better two or three months after they are taken from the orchard than at the time they drop. And

there were clusters of grapes yesterday that went in from the harbour, that will next Christmas or Thanksgiving-day hang above the banquet. But my text compares our opportunities of repentance and return to more perishable products. Aye, it sets before you in graphic vision a basket of *summer fruit*.

Many of you remember, a few years ago, when the peach crop suddenly ripened, and all the rail trains and steamers coming to our city were laden with the delicious product. The fruit was dead ripe, and not able to wait until the glutted markets were cleared, and so there were hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of the fruit thrown into the streets, and into the rivers, and carted back again to enrich the soil. O the perishable nature of summer fruit. It is so much like our spiritual blessings, which must be used immediately, or never used at all. To-night, instead of having you wandering around as through the stalls of an agricultural fair, I would have you, with profound and agitated feelings of soul, look upon this text as depicting your last chance for heaven, as it is all suggestively set forth. "Behold, a basket of summer fruit."

Was this statement of the text the blundering comparison of a man not used to literary composition? Do you think the analogy will hold out? Is there any similarity between the Gospel and summer fruit? O, yes. They both, in the *first place, mean health*. God every summer doctors the ailments of the world by the orchards and groves. The failing of the orchards is a license to all kinds of diseases, and plenty of fruit ordinarily means improved sanitary condition. So this Gospel means health. It makes a man mighty for work, and strong for contest. It cures spiritual ailments. It helps the soul that is decrepid, bound on in the road to heaven. It is juvenescence. It is convalescence. It kindles the eyes with brilliant anticipations. It thrills

the soul with glories to come. It is not a weak sentimentality. It helped Paul to stand

## UNBLANCHED ON THE DECK

of the foundering corn ship, and it helped Luther nail his defiant "Theses" against the door of the electoral college, the thumping of his hammer echoing through all the ages. It has helped ten thousand souls to spring through flood and fire to glories immortal. O, it is a swarthy Gospel. Mighty in itself, it makes men mighty. It gives one overmastering power in the day of trouble. The Church cries out to Christ in the Canticles: "Comfort me with apples," and so to-night I shake down upon you a whole orchard of fruit, while I read that the fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, brotherly kindness, charity. Gather it up from the ground—large, round, luscious. Take it home with you—"a basket of summer fruit."

I notice that the analogy also is found in the fact that summer fruit *is pleasant to the eye and the taste*. So the Gospel, when a man rightly sees it and tastes it, is very pleasant. Whether summer fruit be piled up in the orchard, or on the barn floor, or on the platter of the table, the commingling of green, and gold, and red, and brown, in the cheek of the fruit is very fascinating. You know that some artists deal chiefly with pictures of fruit; and while Corregio delights to sketch physical beauty, and Turner drops the sea-foam on the canvas, and Cuyp drives up his cattle at evening tide, and Rosa Bonheur catches by the halter the rearing steeds at the "Horse Fair," and Edwin Landseer whistles up the dogs, there are many of our modern painters who are putting all their power on fruit pieces, and I do not wonder at it. There is a beauty in fruit indescribable. So it is with the Gospel of Christ. It charms the young and the old, the well and the sick, the wise and the ignorant. It

has the glitter of the wave, the aroma of flowers, the fascination of music. It is the luxury of the ages. Religion is not an abbess—is not a cenobite. “Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.”

In June, 1815, there was a very noble party gathered in a house in St. James's-square, London. The Prince Regent was present, and the occasion was made fascinating by music, and banqueting, and by jewels. While a quadrille was being formed, suddenly all the people rushed to the windows. What is the matter? Henry Percy had arrived with the news that Waterloo had been fought, and that England had won the day. The dance was abandoned; the party dispersed; lords, ladies, and musicians rushed into the street, and, in fifteen minutes from the first announcement of the good news, the house was emptied of all its guests. O ye who are seated at the banquet of this world, or whirling in its gaities and frivolities, if to-night you could hear the sweet strains of the Gospel trumpet announcing Christ's victory over sin, and death, and hell, you would rush forth, glad in the eternal deliverance. The Waterloo against sin has been fought, and our Commander-in-chief hath won the day. O, the joys of this salvation!

#### I DO NOT CARE

what metaphor, what comparison you have; bring it to me that I may use it. Amos shall bring one simile, Isaiah another, David another, John another. Beautiful with pardon. Beautiful with peace. Beautiful with anticipations. I spread out the heaped up, large, round, luscious “basket of summer fruit.”

You have noticed that *if summer fruit is not taken immediately, it soon fails*. First, the speck; then a multiplication of defects; after awhile a softening that is offensive; and then it is all flung out. So I have to tell you that all re-

ligious advantages, all Gospel opportunities, all religious privileges, while they are beautiful and attractive, perish right speedily if you do not take them. I suppose you have noticed how swiftly the days and the years go by. Every day seems to me like "a basket of summer fruit:" the morning sky is vermilion, the noonday is opaline, the evening cloud is fire-dyed. Every day has its cluster of blessings and its fruity branch of opportunities. But how soon they are gone! Where is 1873? 1870? 1860? 1850? Gone as thoroughly as the fruit which dropped from the trees and rotted last August. Every year may have its characteristic. In one the war broke out; in another the locusts made terrible ravages; in another the yellow fever raged: but I care not what be the characteristics, they are all gone save one. Of the six thousand years of this world's existence, only one is left. Aye, ten months of that is gone, or nearly gone, and the tongue in the clock of the months will soon strike twelve, and then this year will be as dead as all its predecessors. In your library, you put the historical volumes side by side, volume first, volume second, volume third, volume fourth; and the history of the past is made up of six thousand volumes, three hundred and sixty-five pages in each of the volumes, and in the last day, at one flash, you will read all of them. Time, how swiftly it goes! Gray hairs are here and there upon you, and some of you know it not. The "crow's-foot" is coming nearer up towards the corner of the eye. You stoop more than you used to do. You have been discussing as to the propriety of wearing glasses. You are going from the thirties into the forties, and from the forties into the fifties, and from the fifties into the sixties, and from the sixties into the seventies. The colour is going out of the "basket of summer fruit." The curculio of trouble hath left the mark of its sting. The work of decay has begun, and the full basket of human life

will soon be emptied into the trench of the grave. When I first became anxious about my soul, there was a soliloquy I read in Mr. Pike's "Address to the Unsaved." It was a soliloquy on this very subject. It represented a man dying, and as he was dying, the clock struck. As the clock struck, the man was startled, and he cried out: "O time, it is fit that thou shouldst strike thy murderer to the heart. How art thou gone for ever? A month! O for a week! I ask not for a year, though

#### AN AGE WERE TOO SHORT

for the work I have to do. Remorse for the past throws my thoughts on the future. Worse dread of the future throws my thoughts on the past. I turn and turn, and find no ray. If thou didst feel one half the mountain that is on my heart, thou wouldst struggle with the martyr for his stake, and bless heaven for the flame that is not an unquenchable fire. O, Thou blasphemed, yet, most indulgent Lord God, hell itself is a refuge, if it hide me from Thy frown!"

Still further, I remark *upon the perishable nature of all religious surroundings*. You sometimes go into a religious association, and you say: "Isn't this beautiful? How many ripe, religious experiences. Why, it is like 'a basket of summer fruit.'" But do you not know, my brother, that all these Christian associations fade away from the soul? Your Christian father and mother, who have been holding beneficent influences over you, do you not realize they are going away from you? Do you not notice that they do not get over sickness as soon as they used to? Are you not aware of the fact that they do not get over a cold as quickly as once? The fact is that they have made more prayers for you than they will ever make again. They have passed the last mile-stone on the road home, and if you are going

to get any benefit from that "basket of summer fruit," get it now, or get it never. Some of you do not know what it is to stand and look down upon the still and rigid features of a Christian father or a Christian mother. I do. In five minutes you will think of all the unkind words you ever said to them. You may cover up the coffin with wreathes, and crosses, and crowns; but you cannot make anything attractive out of it. It is trouble, and nothing but trouble, for those who sit and sigh with the consciousness that those dear lips will never pray for you again, and those lips will never sympathize with you again. When you stoop down and kiss for the last time the wrinkled brow just before the lid is screwed on, you will think of what I tell you to-night. O, if father and mother be still alive with their Christian influences, cherish them while you may. Take their example. Be profited by their prayers. They are ripe for heaven and cannot stay. The "basket of summer fruit" will soon be gone.

So also it is, my friends, with all God's offers of mercy and salvation. Are you to-night under the infatuation that those privileges are going to be continued? O no. Every opportunity of salvation seems to be restless until it gets away from us. Going away, the sermons; going away, the songs; going away, the strivings of God's Eternal Spirit. The fruits of immortal life, fair and luscious, are no sooner set before the soul than they disappear. The Theban legion consisted of six thousand, six hundred, and sixty-six men. Maximian decreed that that host should be decimated—that is, every tenth man should be put to the sword. So it was done; but the soldiers did not submit to the kingly authority, and so another decimation took place, and the work went on until all of the six thousand, six hundred, and sixty-six men had perished. Now, I do not know how many people may be in this house to-night, but.



## IT IS AN ARMY.

It is going to be decimated. One out of every ten will soon be gone, and after that the work will go on; and again one out of every ten will be gone, and again the decimation will take place, until not a single person in this house to-night will be alive. Our bodies, some of them, will be in Greenwood, in Laurel Hill, in Mount Auburn, in Oaklands, in Grey Friars churchyard, in the village cemetery; but your souls will be in one of two places, the names of which I need not mention, for they rush upon you this moment with thunderous articulation and emphasis.

Many have missed their chance. Now there is no hiding that fact—they have missed their chance. They came in and looked at the “basket of summer fruit.” They admired the gracefulness of the wicker work; the delicacy of the rind; the greenness of the leaves. They went off. They came back and admired again. But one day they came, and they found that all the glory had faded, and that the fruit had been thrown out. They came to a certain evening. They saw the sun set. They never saw the sun rise again. The pastor pronounced upon them the benediction. It was the last benediction they ever heard. They took their last step, spoke their last word, breathed their last breath, they missed their last chance. Fortunately for us their voice is not strong enough to ring up until we can hear it, or it would make life on earth intolerable with the wailing. The wall is so thick that we hear not one word of their pang. Perished! Perished! They talk no more about there being time enough yet. They have no time. They worry no longer about the inconsistencies of Christians; they are looking after their own condition. They no more argue that there is no such a thing as a lost soul; they have felt the pang that comes from a fall ten thousand fathoms down. O sceptical man, go out and persuade them that there is no

retribution for a soul that forgets God. Break open the gate, dash through the fire; leap the intervening cliff, and cry out to them: "There is no hell!" and ten thousand voices will answer back: "There is. See you not the gate? Feel you not the sorrow? We have been here five hundred years, and yet the woe has just begun. Go back and tell all you have seen. Tell them that we once were as they are, and that they, unless they repent, shall be as we are ourselves. We had the fruits of life set before us, fair as "a basket of summer fruit," but we would not take them, and we everlastingly died. Lost! Lost!"

My friends, the practical question is now: Will you miss *your* chance? The offer of salvation is now extended to us. It will not always be continued. The day of grace will be past. The probability is that there are some in this audience who will miss their opportunity. I put my hand on your pulse, and I find that

#### THE FEVER HAS BEGUN.

I look upon your brow, and I find the shadow of impending doom. I listen to your breath, and I find it is suggestive of the last gasp. Some of you will be lost! See! you are falling now—down from heaven, from life, from peace—down, down. I remember reading how Leonidas, with three hundred men, stood in the pass between Eta and the sea, fighting back the Persian hosts. The Persian hosts came on. They trampled him down. O that God, to-night, would arm me, a poor, weak man, with a supernatural courage, to stand in the pass of this glorious Sabbath hour, and dispute with this army that I see before me, the way to death. Halt! ye infatuated souls. I swing the two-edged sword both ways. Halt! Halt! Take not one step more on this downward path. Why will ye die when there is no use in it? Are you so charmed with pain, and sin, and sorrow, and woe,

that you will wade through the foaming billows of perdition to win them? Is there nothing in the systematic tears of friends, nothing in the sacrificial blood of the Son of God, nothing in the death-bed experiences of those whom you have loved, nothing in the crash of the judgment avalanche, to make you think.

I can tell from the way the country sexton rings the bell, when he is about to stop ringing it. When he begins to ring, the music comes softly out on the air; the bell fills all the air with music. He lays hold with strong pull; but after awhile, when the horses have been tied, and the people have gathered, then there is some distance of time between the strokes of the bell. It gets slower and slower, for he has begun to toll, and after a while it stops. O sinner, how swiftly the invitations of the Gospel came to you! Call after call. Invitation after invitation. Floods of them. Floods of them. How merrily the bell did ring. But it seems as if with some of you God's patience is exhausted; as if His mercy were almost gone. The bell rings slower to-night than it ever rang before, and as if about to stop. Aye, it seems to have come to the dying toll. Thrice more it will speak—perhaps only thrice. Toll! Toll! Toll!

It was to set forth this solemn truth that religious advantages, while they last, are attractive, but very soon leave us, that God let down to Amos the herdsman, in vision, the beautiful but perishable basket of summer fruit.

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## PHEBE PALMER, THE EVANGELIST.

"I go to prepare a place for you."—*John* xiv. 2.

**A**MONG the most startling stories ever recited are those connected with the adventures of the Western emigrant. In the days before the rail-train showered its sparks upon the darkness of the wilderness, people put out on foot, or in slow and cumbrous waggons, from our Eastern homes, and in the wild thickets of the far West sought to clear for their families a home. Ofttimes leaving their tender little ones in the New England village, with blanket, and gun, and axe, they dared the forest, terrible with bear's bark, and panther's scream, and the war-whoop cry of scalp-savages. After awhile the trees were felled, and the underbush was burned, and the farm was cleared, and the house was built. Then word came back here, saying that everything was ready. The family would get into the waggon and start on at a slow pace for a very long journey. After awhile, some evening tide, the shout of recognition was heard, and by the fire of the great back log the newly-arrived would recount the exciting experiences of the way.

Well, my friends, we are all about to become emigrants to a far country. This is no place for us to stay. Our older brother, Jesus, Him of the scarred brow and the blistered feet, has gone ahead to build our mansion and to clear the way for us, and He sends a letter back, saying He has it all ready; and I break the seal of that letter and read to you these words: "I go to prepare a place for you."

I might put it in another shape. A young man resolves to build a home for himself. He has pledged himself in one of the purest of earthly attachments. He toils no more for himself than for the one who will share with him the results of his industrious accumulation. After awhile the

fortune is made, the house is built, the right hands are joined, the blessing is invoked, the joy is consummated. So Jesus, the lover of our souls, has been toiling to make a place for us. He is fitting up our mansion. He is gathering around it everything that can possibly enchant the soul, and after awhile He will say: "It is all ready now," and He will reach down His hand and take up to His fair residence "the Church, which is the Lamb's wife." "I go to prepare a place for you."

"But," says some one, "that implies that

#### HEAVEN IS A PLACE.

I have heard a great many people say it was merely a condition, and that wherever the souls of the righteous are, there is Heaven." Absurd idea! Christ ascended to heaven, and there must have been a heaven to go to. Elijah went up to heaven, and there must have been a heaven for him to go to. The Bible was not written merely for philologists and hair splitters, but for common-sense people, and the plain reading of my text implies not only that heaven is a condition, but that it is a glorious locality. "I go to prepare a *place* for you."

Where is heaven? It is the question which every intelligent Christian sometimes asks, and he especially asks it in time of bereavement. When his loved ones go away from him, you say they are in heaven; but he says: "Where is heaven?" You know there are a great many theories in regard to it. The Mahomedans think that the good Moslems, as soon as they leave this life, come to a fragrant pool of water fed by streams from Paradise. They drink out of that fragrant pool, and their thirst is assuaged. Then they go into Paradise, and the trees have bells hanging on the branches, chiming whenever the air strikes them. They gaze upon the tree of life, which they say has so broad a

shadow that it takes a swift horse one hundred years to race across it. They think that there is a river made up of wine and honey, flowing between banks of camphor, over beds of musk. They suppose that every spirit that goes into the future world has many attendants, with baskets and with chalices of pure gold. They suppose that the inhabitant of the future world sits down to a great banquet without any satiety, so that after a hundred years of eating and drinking the appetite is as good as at the moment the soul sat down. That is the Mahomedan heaven.

The Hindoo thinks that heaven is all around about—merely a change of body. A vulture dies and his spirit enters a man. The man dies and his spirit enters the vulture; and after great many transmigrations of the soul, it is absorbed in the spirit of the great Brahm. Our forefathers thought heaven to be a place of pastimes, heroic strife, and great banquetting; spirits would fight and be wounded, and then come to the celestial streams and wash off their wounds, and they would be well again; then they would sit down at a banquet and drink wine out of the skull of their enemies, and rise up and romp, and dance, and play.

The aborigines of America think heaven to be situated beyond the great mountains. After you get beyond the great mountains, there is a great river, and after you have passed that great river, there is a vast country, and after you have passed that wide country, there is a world of water, and in that world of water there are a thousands isles, beautiful with streams and trees, and there are buffalo and deer there, and all the departed red man has to do is to whistle up his dogs, and go a-shooting to all eternity.

I mention these things because I want you to know it is impossible for a man to get any idea of heaven without the Bible, and to kindle in your soul a feeling of gratitude to God that you have this lamp, not only for your pathway

here, but to throw its glories upon the world that is to come. There is, however, among Christian people,

#### GREAT DIFFERENCE OF OPINION

as to where heaven is or will be. Some of the best Christian people think that this world is to be the final residence of the righteous. I can see how God could take all the rigours out of our climate, and all repulsions out of our world, and make it fair, and bright, and beautiful, and fit for eternal occupancy. But I cannot adopt the theory. It seems to me the world is not large enough for heaven. Considering all the myriads that have gone, and all the myriads that are to go, there would not be room enough on the continents and on the seas for such a great host. Besides that, heaven is already in existence. Tens of thousands of people have gone into it. It cannot be that all our departed friends are floating about in space, waiting for our world to get filled up, in order that they may have a heaven. O no. They are there now. Christ said: "I go to prepare a place for you," and if eighteen centuries ago He began the work, I think it is done now. Besides that, the Bible declares that the world, and all the thing that are therein, will be burned up; and if a thing is burned up you cannot repair it, and you cannot make it a fit residence for the righteous. If it is first destroyed, it will be an entirely new world. Besides that, the elements of dissolution are already in our world. I refer not to the coal mines in the south, which have been twenty years on fire. I refer not to the vapours coming up from the hot springs, showing great heat underneath, but to the common geological idea that the centre of this world is already on fire. Besides, there is all about a subtle fluid which, if decomposed or set loose from other combinations, would shatter this world into pieces so small that nothing but the eye of the Infinite God could find the splinters of

the wreck. It would destroy mountains, and seas, and air. So it will require no omnipotent pry to lift up the mountains in the last day. It will not require the blast of the red-hot furnace of God's indignation to set the sea on fire. It will not require the grip of almightiness to pull down the pillar of this world. God has only to take His hands off it, and it is gone. The mere cessation of operation on God's part would be the cause of the wreck. Besides that, other worlds have burned. Fifteen hundred stars have disappeared. The astronomer, through his telescope, again and again has seen the conflagration of a world. Why not our world burn up? Aye,

#### I ADOPT THE THEORY

that Peter declares in his epistle when he says: "The world and all that is therein shall be burned up."

There are other Christian people who suppose that each sun is to be the heaven of the surrounding system. You know that there are sisterhoods of worlds that join each other in bands of light around some great central orb, and Christian people have supposed that these surrounding worlds were merely schools in which souls went to be prepared for the central light, the central sun; and there is a Bible intimation that is not at all inconsistent with that idea; for, while planets have day and night, and heat and cold, showing the possibility of growth and dissolution, the sun has no night, and that corresponds with the Bible statement about heaven: "There shall be no night there." Still I reject the idea, because if the sun of each system were the heaven of the system we should have a multitude of Paradises, and the words of my text could not be true: "I go to prepare a place"—that is, *one* place—"for you."

There is one other theory consonant with the Bible and consonant with science, and I like anything that is proved



by both those books, or is not inharmonious with either of them. Modern discovery shows that the planets go around the sun, and that the sun and the planets—indeed all the celestial systems—go in one direction and in one circle, all going around about some one great central world; a world vast beyond all astronomical calculation; a world vast enough, by power of gravitation, to wheel the whole universe around it. As our sun, our little sun, is five hundred times larger than the earth and the planets, thus wheeling them around it, so then, I suppose, the great central world of which I speak is five hundred times larger than all the other worlds put together, so as to wheel them around it. You must believe in the existence of such a central world, unless you reject all scientific exploration and deduction. That world, stupendous beyond arithmetic, beyond words, beyond imagination, I believe is heaven. From all parts of the universe the souls of the dead will fly to that centre. That shall gather up all the resources, and splendours, and glories that God ever created or redeeming love ever achieved. Gradually the worlds will expire; not only ours but those and these, and finally all save two—the one great central world of which I speak, and a world of darkness; the first the residence of the righteous, the other the abode of the wicked. You say this theory makes

#### HEAVEN A GREAT WAY OFF.

No! No! We calculate distance by the time taken to traverse it, and the departed spirit will not take the millionth part of a second to get there.

But here I have to tell you that I do not much care where heaven is. All I want is to get there myself, and get these people there. Christ is there, and the angels of God are there, and all my Christian kindred who have departed are there.

“No grief can turn that day to night,  
The darkness of that land is light!”

Into that world how many of our loved ones have gone. We have sent delegations into it. This morning I wish to speak more especially of one who went out from amongst us,—a Christian woman known all the world over. She has just entered into that glorious world that vast world where Christ is. Among the Hannah Mores, and Charlotte Elizabeths, and the Mrs. Adoniram Judsons, and the Mrs. Fletchers, Phebe Palmer has taken her place, radiant as any of them—perhaps more radiant than them all. It seems to me she must have had a very easy entrance. She did not have to crowd through. When half-and-half Christians come up to the gate of heaven methinks they have to squeeze in, that the gate grazes them on both sides, or closes behind them, catching the skirts of their garment. Not so with her. An abundant entrance was administered unto her. I think a mandate went forth: “Lift up your heads, ye everlasting gates, and let her come through.” O, I should have liked to have stood somewhere near the gate, to have heard the multitudinous shout that greeted her from all the armies of the saved.

I cannot, as a minister of the most high God, allow such a life to be passed, and such a death to be witnessed, without, as far as I may, prolonging the echo.

I admired her as the discoverer of what is called, rightly or wrongly, “the higher life.” Columbus no more certainly discovered our new world than Phebe Palmer discovered that new world of light, and love, and joy, and peace which she spoke of. Columbus did not create this new world; he only pointed it out. Phebe Palmer did not create “the higher life;” she only exhibited it. She showed to the Church of God that there were

#### MOUNTAIN PEAKS OF CHRISTIAN SATISFACTION

that it had never attained, and created in the souls of us

who have not reached that elevation a longing for the glorious ascent. For thirty-seven years—longer than the life, perhaps, of the majority of people present to-day—every Tuesday she had a meeting, the sole object of which was the elevation of the standard of Christian holiness; and there were hundreds of Christian ministers who came in and sat down at her feet and got her blessing, and went out stronger for Christian combat. It was no rare thing, in her evangelistic meetings in the United States and Europe, to have ministers of the Presbyterian Church, and the Baptist Church, and the Methodist Church, and the Episcopal Church, and all the Churches, coming and kneeling down at the altar, bemoaning their unbelief and their coldness, and then rising up, saying: "I have got it—the blessing." Some caricatured and said there was no such thing as "a higher life" of peace and Christian satisfaction; but she lived long enough to see the whole Christian Church waking up to this doctrine, and thousands, and tens of thousands, coming on the high table-land where once she stood, she herself having passed on now, higher up, that she may still beckon us on, crying: "Up this way! Up this way!" Glorious soul of Phebe Palmer! Synonym of holiness unto the Lord!

I am also amazed at the number of conversions under her ministry. She was as far removed as possible from those females who go through the land bawling about their rights, neglecting their home duties, having their husbands hold their hats and shawls while they make speeches in behalf of their rights of suffrage, or in behalf of a seat in Congressional halls—those restless women, marriage to whom would be pandemonium. As far as the north pole is from the south pole, Phebe Palmer was from all them. Always accompanied by her husband, she went out to serve Christ, and she wanted no higher right than this, the grandest right

ever given to man or woman—the right to commend the Lord Jesus Christ to a dying world. Modestly and in Christian consecration she went forth to serve God. It will take eternal ages to tell the story of her evangelistic labours. Newcastle, Sunderland, Penrith, Macclesfield, Darlington, Isle of Wight, still feel

#### HER OVERMASTERING INFLUENCE.

In her Christian meetings a young man rose up and said: "Why, I have got a new nature;" and the timid woman exclaimed: "Do you think Christ will have me?" and the evangelist put her arms around her neck, and said: "Yes, Jesus will have you." And another cried out: "O, what a fool I have been all my days to reject Christ." And the Duke of Wellington's blind soldier, seventy years of age, both eyes put out in battle, was led by a little child to the communion rail, and while prayer was being offered, on his blasted vision eternal light broke in. And the soldier in the Queen's employ, drafted for India, stood up in the meeting, in the red jacket uniform, and said: "Pray for me wherever I go, that I may be faithful. You look at my red jacket, but if you could see under it you would see a white and blood-washed robe." At Windsor the musicians of the Queen's band, instruments under arm, stopped and looked and listened, and then and there heard the voice of Christ from this woman's lips, and took Christ with them back to the palace. And the police that stood at the door too, listening, even they surrendered themselves to the Lord who bought them. Places of iniquity cowered before her. At North Shields, a man who kept intoxicating liquors for sale said: "I don't know why Dr. and Mrs. Palmer came here to bother me. Before they came to this place, I used to draw off half a barrel of beer every night for my customers. Now I scarcely draw off a quart." Sixty souls saved one night

in Sunderland under her work. Six hundred souls brought to God at her call in Manchester. One thousand souls, through her, finding redeeming love at Madeley. Three thousand four hundred and forty-four brought to God in the district of Newcastle. Twenty-five thousand souls saved under the instrumentality of Phebe Palmer! What a record for earth and heaven! What an array for the judgment-day! What a doxology for the one hundred and forty and four thousand! What a mountain of coronets flung down at the feet of Jesus! I am amazed also at her power of prayer. We dabble in it once in awhile, but do not know much about the art. Phebe Palmer got what she asked for because she knew how to ask. Sailing up towards Liverpool, with her husband, she prays God that some one may meet them on the beach, and welcome them to England. Coming up by the shore there is a man in the garb of a minister, standing. She says: "There is a man who has come to welcome us to England." The boat strikes the dock, and the minister steps on board and says: "Is this Dr. and Mrs. Palmer? Welcome to the shores of old England!" Worn out physically with her Christian exertions, she asks for strength.

#### GOD GIVES IT TO HER.

Labouring in some place amid great obstacles, she asks that that night a great multitude may be saved; and a multitude press into the side-room, repenting, praying, believing, rejoicing. On the way home from England a man falls overboard. She sees him floating almost a mile away. She cries mightily unto God for that man's rescue, saying: "Save him, and I will point him to Christ, and I will try to have him become a Christian." And she prayed in an agony that he might be saved, and, by what seemed a miraculous effort, he was saved and brought on deck, and the evangelist did her work with him. Starting with the safe promise

that the Lord never lies, she found out the secret of all-prevailing and all-conquering prayer. O Thou who hearest prayer, teach us how to pray! I believe that one hundred Phebe Palmers would bring the millennium to-morrow morning.

But the shepherdess, crook in hand, has gone home to rest by the still waters. The loving wife, the gentle sister, the Christian mother, the flaming evangelist, is dead. One would have supposed that, after so useful a life, the Lord would have allowed her to pass off easily. No. Ten weeks of great anguish, a complication of diseases adding pang to pang. It seemed as if Christ had said: "Now, on this death-bed, I will demonstrate that my grace is sufficient for everything and can bear up under everything." It seemed as if Christ had said: "Now here is a royal gem for a royal place. I have been fifty years busy with it, polishing it and polishing it, and now only a few more cuttings of the chisel and a few more raspings of the file, and it will be as rare a gem as was ever prepared in all the centuries. Ten weeks of pain are nothing before an eternity of jubilation!" At half-past two o'clock on the afternoon of November the second, God put up His tools, and said: "The work of polishing is done. *Let her go now.*"

Her life was a song; her death a "Hallelujah Chorus." In her last sickness she said: "I am fully saved. I have not a single doubt. Hallelujah to God and the Lamb! When a daughter said: "Do you see me, ma?" she said: "I see no one but Jesus, but I shall soon

#### SEE THE KING IN HIS BEAUTY.

Glory be to the Father! Glory be to the Son! Glory be the Holy Ghost!" When they bathed her fevered hands she said: "I shall soon bathe my hands in the life-giving waters." On the last morning, as she woke up, she said:

"O death! where is Thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory? Then she pronounced the apostolic benediction, a benediction for her husband, for her children, for the Church universal, and for the world whose redemption she had tried to hasten: "May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with you all for ever. Amen." And Phebe Palmer was dead!

No, no, no; not dead. She lives! she lives! It seems to me as if I could almost see her standing this morning on the battlements of heaven, waving the triumph, calling down to us through the sweet Sabbath air; and I wave back to her. Hail! ransomed spirit. Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

### THE OVERFLOWING CUP.

"My cup runneth over."—*Psalms* xxiii. 5.

EVERY few years we have people critical of the Thanksgiving proclamation. They say: "We have nothing to be thankful for. Commerce down; manufactures dull; commercial prospects blasted. Better have a day for fasting than a day for feasting." Indeed, have you nothing to be thankful for? Does your heart beat? Do your eyes see? Do your ears hear? Did you breakfast this morning? Did you sleep last night? Are the glorious heavens above your head? Is the solid earth beneath your feet? Have you a Bible, a Christ, a proffered heaven? Aye, those of us who are the worst off, have more blessings than we appreciate, and "our cup runneth over."

There is a table spread to-day across the top of the two great ranges of mountains which ridge this continent—a table which reaches from the Atlantic to the Pacific seas. It is the Thanksgiving table of the nation. They come from the east, and the west, and the north, and the south, and

sit at it. On it are smoking the products of all lands, birds of every aviary, cattle from every pasture, fish from every lake, feathered spoils from every farm. The fruit baskets bend down under the products plucked from the peach fields of New Jersey, the apple orchards of Western New York, the orange groves of Florida, the vineyards of Ohio, and the nuts threshed from New England woods. The bread is white from the wheat fields of Illinois and Michigan, the banqueters are adorned with California gold, and the table is agleam with Nevada silver, and the feast is warmed with the fire grates heaped up with Pennsylvania coal. The hall is spread with carpets from Lowell mills, and to-night the lights will flash from bronzed brackets of Philadelphia manufacture. The fingers of Massachusetts girls have hung the embroidery; the music is the drumming of ten thousand mills accompanied by the shout of children let loose for play, and the gladness of harvesters driving barnward the loads of sheaves, and the thanksgivings of the nation which crowd the celestial gates with doxologies, until the oldest harper of heaven cannot tell where the terrestrial song ends and the celestial song begins.

Welcome, Thanksgiving-day! Whatever we may think of New England theology, we all like New England Thanksgiving-day. What meant the rush last night to the depots and the long rail trains darting their lanterns along the tracks of the Stonington and Providence, Boston and Lowell, New Haven and Springfield, Plymouth and South Braintree railroads? Ask the happy group in the New England farmhouse. Ask the rustics in the cabin among the Green Mountains. Ask the New England villagers whose song of praise this morning comes over the Berkshire hills. O, it is a great day of national festivity. Clap your hands, ye people, and shout aloud for joy. Through the organ pipes let there come down the thunder of a nation's rejoicing.



Blow the cornet! Wave the palm branches! O, that men would praise the Lord for His goodness and for His wonderful works to the children of men. "My cup runneth over."

I propose to speak to you this morning about Thanksgiving in the house, Thanksgiving in the hovels of the poor, Thanksgiving in the Church, Thanksgiving in the city, Thanksgiving in the nation. Without stopping to ring your door-bell, I come into your house, and I look around and see what God has been doing for you during the past year. You say: "Come in. I am

VERY GLAD TO SEE YOU.

Sit down in this arm-chair, or on this sofa, and make yourself at home." O no, my friends, I cannot stop. I just want to look around and see what God has been doing for you in your home. "O," you say, "our house is not so large now as the one we used to have." I answer, what of that? It is a great deal of trouble to keep a large house clean. Besides that, a small house is so cozy. Besides that, it is a bad thing for children to have a luxuriant starting, for when they get out into the world and are married, they then begin to talk about the way they used to have it, and say: "I haven't been accustomed to such cramped up apartments." Bless God if you have a snug, cozy home. But I step into your parlour, and I find there the evidences of refinement, and culture, and friendship. The sofas and chairs are not always empty. Sympathizing friends sit here when you have trouble. Mirthful friends sit here when you are in good cheer. This chandelier will flash down upon social gathering, and upon Christmas tree, and upon merry-making. These keys have often been thrummed by your children, and there is in the portfolio on the music rack many a well-worn song of "Old Oaken Bucket" and "Old Arm Chair;" and while your grandfathers entertained their guests under rough

hewn rafters and on bare floors, you have a parlour in which are the evidences of painter's pencil, and engraver's knife, and sculptor's chisel, and I stand in the midst of all this refinement and elegance of your parlour and demand your thanksgiving unto the Lord.

I go on to the next room and step into your nursery, and I am greeted with the shout and laughter of your children. They romp; they hide; they clap their hands. I get down on the floor and play with them. What bright eyes! What merry hearts! What swift feet! God bless them! Their little troubles dissolve in a tear. Their little enmities are gone after a minute's pouting. Busy all day, without fatigues, they fall asleep chattering and wake up singing. And the little baby has its realm, waving its sceptre over the parental heart, and you look down in its wondering eyes and see whole worlds of promise there, and think to yourself, "Those little hands will smooth my locks when they get gray, and those little feet will run for me when I am sick, and those eyes will weep for me when I am gone." O, hush him to sleep with a holy song. Let him know the name of Jesus long before he can pronounce it. Thank God to-day that upon your home has come the brightness of childhood, and drop a tear of grief for those who weep over a despoiled cradle and toys that never will be caught up again by little hands now still, alas, for ever.

I step from this room into the dining-hall. You have not invited me to dine with you, but I come right in without invitation and sit down at your table to-day. I do not see any signs of starving around here, although you talk so much about hard times. Besides that, it seems to me you have all the world waiting upon you. The cabinet makers have prepared with great toil the furniture; the farmers worried themselves almost to death in raising the wheat from which this bread was made; the sailor was lashed to

the mast to bring you those foreign luxuries; whole herds and flocks at different times have fallen under the knife of the butcher to please your palate; the miners toiled in damp and darkness to get the coal that warms your dining-room to-day. Summer sun, and driving snow, and howling tempest have sent their contributions to your table to-day. None of your children are crying for bread in vain. The barrel of meal has not wasted; the cruise of oil has not failed.

BREAD ENOUGH AND TO SPARE,

while many have perished with hunger. O do not, to-day, draw your knife across the sharpening steel until you have sent up one word of thanksgiving to the Lord who has given you all these mercies; and if you are not accustomed to asking a blessing at the table, I think this day will be a good one in which to begin, and if you cannot think of anything else to say, then take the words of my text: "My cup runneth over."

I step out from the dining-hall into your library, and see your table covered with books, and magazines, and newspapers fresh from the publishing houses. It seems to me really as if the historians, and the fabulists, and the pamphleteers, and the philosophers of the world were waiting your bidding. Here, on this historic shelf of your library, you have Bancroft, and Prescott, and Macaulay to tell you the rude story of early America, or describe the wonders of Mexican scenery, or call back the eloquence of the old Parliaments that death long ago dissolved with more than the imperiousness of Cromwell. And here is your poetic shelf, on which stand Dr. Young with his weeping harp, and Walter Scott sounding the Highland bagpipe, and Longfellow ringing out the war-whoop through "Hiawatha," and William Cullen Bryant mingling the moan of the wild woods with the call of the brown thresher. And here is the shelf that Dickens has all to himself, from "Oliver Twist" to "Edwin Drood,"

avenging the world's sorrows, weeping the world's sins, exposing the world's hypocrisies, winning the world's applause. Thank God for books—plenty of them—books to make you study, books to waft you into reverie, books to make you weep, books to make you laugh, books in cloth, books in morocco, in satin, in gold; books of travel, of anecdote, of memoir, of legend; books scrolled, and starred, and wreathed and columned; books about insects, about birds, about shells, about everything. Books for the young, books for the old. "O," says some one, "I have not all these luxuries; I have not all these comforts of the parlour, of the nursery, of the dining-hall, of the library. But, my brother, most certainly you know something of the height, and depth, and length, and breadth of that sweet, tender, joyous, triumphant word, "*Home!*" Do not look at it as a place merely to stay in, as the lion looks at the lair, or the fox his burrow, or the eagle his eyrie. Do not call it your apartments, or your lodgings, or your domicile, but—by all the memory of those who are gone; by the memory of the old people, whether here or there; for the sake of childhood; for the sake of all that is good, and pure, and true, and blessed—call it *home*.

O gather your families together to-day. If you have a musical instrument, open it; if you have not, open your heart—the best of all musical instruments—and while the Lord listens, and the memory of the past rushes through your soul: "O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good; for His mercy endureth for ever;" and let each one clap his hands, and say for himself: "My cup runneth over."

I pass on now to look at Thanksgiving in the hovels of the poor. No banquet smoking on their table. It is a sad thing to see a poor man, the evening before Thanksgiving, looking into a full grocery window, while he thinks

of his destitute home. O it is hard to be hungry in a world with ripe orchards, and luxuriant harvests, and herds of cattle driven to the slaughtering. It is hard to be cold in a world where the forests are waiting for the axe-man, and the mines are waiting for the miners. It is a hard thing to be unclad in a world where there are so many swift cylinders in motion, so many manufactories of goods, and where the fox, and the beaver, and the Arctic bear, and the Siberian squirrel are dying in order that men may have their furs. To-day

#### DO NOT STUFF YOURSELF

to surfeiting without thinking of those who are gaunt with hunger; do not put your feet up by the warm register without thinking, at least once, of those whose last scuttle of coal is gone. When, to-night, you turn on the gas full head, and it glitters along the wall in bubbles of fire, do not forget to think of those whose last candle has hissed in the socket. If you have nothing better than an old jacket, or a worn-out pair of shoes, or a coat that has been patched until it has become "a coat of many colours," give something this day to the poor. There are two things that I should like to have my Lord Jesus Christ say to me in the last day: "I was hungry, and ye fed me." "I was naked, and ye clothed me." God help the poor!

But I pass on now, and look at Thanksgiving in the church. Last Thanksgiving we were churchless. We had a wall partly up, a pile of bricks, a heap of lumber. That was about our position. It was a doleful day to me. I wandered about with my coat collar up, and rubbing my frost-bitten right ear, and there was not, in all the day, anything that looked like Thanksgiving save the dinner, and that was not as good as usual. We felt like the Israelites in captivity, and would, like them, have hung our harps on the willows, but for the reason our organ was burned up,

and we had no harp, and no willows to hang it on. But where are we to-day? Is this our roof? Are these our altars? Is this our spiritual home? How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob? "Walk about Zion, and go round about her; tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God for ever and ever: He will be our guide even unto death." With organ, with cornet, with multitudinous shout of great congregation, express this day your praise to God: "Our cup runneth over." But better than all material structure is the spiritual blessing that descended, and the six hundred souls who, during these nine months, have stood up at this altar, connecting themselves with our membership—the blessing still hovering—and at every service immortal souls saved. "Bless the Lord, O my soul." I know there are those who think the church is a museum of antediluvian fossils. They think it did very well once, but it is behind the times. That is not your opinion. You love, first, your home, and next, your church. O ye descendants of the men who were hounded amid the Highlands of Scotland, and who fell at Bothwell-bridge; O ye sons and daughters of the men who came across wintry seas to build their log churches in the American wilderness; O ye sons and daughters of those who stood in the awful siege of Leyden, and shouted the martyr's triumph in the horrors of the Brussels market-place; O ye descendants of the men whose garments were dyed in the wine-press of Saint Bartholomew Massacre; ye sons and daughters of the fire, what do you think, to-day, of a quiet church, and a free pulpit, and a Gospel winged with mercy and salvation? What imperial edict forbids our convocation? What sword thirsts for our blood? What fires are kindled for our torture? None. Defended by the law, invited by the Gospel, baptized by the Spirit, we are here to-day free men of the

State, free men of God. Glorious Church! "Twelve wells of water, and three score and ten palm-trees." "My cup runneth over." O this day bring the richest thanksgiving garland, and put it upon the brow of Him who bought the Church, died for your sins, and prepared for you a grand and glorious inheritance. Thanks be unto God for the unspeakable gift of a Saviour.

But I pass on and consider

#### THANKSGIVING IN THE CITY.

It is five years since I came to live in this city. I have seen many cities on both sides the sea, but I have never seen any I like quite so well as this. What quiet Sabbaths. What large and beautiful churches. What a costly and magnificent Mercantile Library. What a glory our Academy of Music. What institutions of learning—Packer, the Polytechnic, the Adelphi, and our glorious common schools, with the Bible in them. Our long lines of streets, beautifully shaded. Our Park, with its arborescent drives, and its affluence of flowers, and its sculptured bridges, and its exquisite lake. Prospered city. Our Mayor honourable. Our judges just. Our police efficient. Beautiful Brooklyn. Blessed for ever be her great population. When we get the bridge done, we will go over and make New York just like it. But after all, I think New York is as moral a city as there is under the sun, considering the number of its population. We are one city after all, on both sides of the East River. There are a great many people who think that the worst city on earth is the combined city of New York and Brooklyn; and I don't know but that some people, from the exaggeration in regard to it, may land at the foot of Cortlandt-street, and rush up to the Hudson River Railroad Depôt, telling the hackman all the way to whip up the horses, lest some scourge come upon them before they get through the town. I don't

know but that some countrymen coming to our city, from the stories that have been told about us, may keep looking over both shoulders lest they be garroted somewhere between Fulton Ferry and the City Hall. I think the politicians are responsible for that exaggerated statement of the way things are in this city. I really think it is a grand city, a beautiful city to live in. Under different administrations of politics it is. We have tried all kinds, the one perhaps as good as the other; the chief difference between the two parties, I have found out, being that that one steals most which has the longest opportunity to steal. The change of administration often being the relief which a man gets when he changes from rheumatism to neuralgia! Still, notwithstanding all these things, I think this a fair city to live in; I don't think there is a better city under the sun. Thank God you live here, and that you can to-day boast, as Paul did, that you are the inhabitant of no mean city.

I pass on once more to look at Thanksgiving in the nation. Peace all through the land. The Indians quiet in the plains. No foreign guns coming up through the Narrows. Insurrection in New Orleans conquered by a revolution at the ballot-box. The South at last satisfied that the wrongs of the last six years will be righted. No American slavery to fight about. By a revolution in national politics, both political parties put upon their good behaviour; that party which does the most for the people in the next year and a-half winning the Presidential chair and the national supremacy. In 1857 there were four thousand two hundred and fifty-seven failures, to the amount of two hundred and sixty-five million, eight hundred and eighteen thousand dollars. People said: "We'll never get out of it." Yet in two years there was not a vestige left of that great commercial disaster. The wheels flew, and the feet of American enterprise tramped on, and we soon got over it.



## THEN CAME THE DARK DAYS

of 1861, when there were five thousand nine hundred and thirty-five business failures, amounting to one hundred and seventy-eight million, six hundred and thirty-two thousand, one hundred and seventy dollars. Then people threw up their hands and said: "We shall never get over this." And yet the largest fortunes of the country have been made since then, and our national prosperity has increased beyond the capacity of any arithmetic to state it. If God brought us out of the trouble of 1857, and out of the misfortunes of 1861, is He not strong enough to bring us out of the troubles of 1874? He will. He will. I believe the prosperities that are yet to come will soon put out of sight all our past national accumulations. Our national debt is rapidly dwindling. Added to all, the fact that we have one hundred and sixty-two thousand square miles of coal, and another one hundred and sixty-two thousand square miles of iron, it seems to me that the metals of the earth are to-day, as with the golden lips of California, and the silver tongue of Nevada, promising the fact that there shall be no end to our national resources.

But look at the harvests. I do not suppose that for more than three or four times within the memory of anybody here there have been such harvests as we have had this year. The grain fields have passed their harvests above the veto of drought and deluge. The freight cars are not large enough to bring down the grain to the seaboard. The canal boats are crowded with bread stuffs. Hark to the rushing of the wheat through the great Chicago corn "elevators." Hark to the rolling of the hogsheads to the Cincinnati pork packers. Enough to eat and at cheap prices. Enough to wear and of home manufacture. If some have and some have not, then may God help those who have to hand over something to those who have not. Clear the track for the

rail-trains that come down, bringing the wheat, and the barley, and the oats, and the hops, and the leather, and everything for man, and everything for beast.

I cannot, I dare not, detain you any longer from the home group. The housekeepers will be angry with me if I keep you until the viands are cold. Set the chairs to the table—the easy chairs for grandfather and grandmother, if they be still alive; the high chair for the youngest and the least. Then put out your hand to take the full cup of thanksgiving; bring it towards your lips, your hands trembling with emotion, and if the chalice shall spill on the cloth, do not be chagrined, but look up thankfully to heaven and say: “My cup runneth over.”

## INVASION OF THE SABBATH.

“Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep.”—*Exodus xxxi. 13.*

THE wisdom of cessation from hard labour one day out of the seven is almost universally acknowledged. The world has found out that it can do less work in seven days than in six, and that the fifty-two days of the year devoted to rest are an addition rather than a subtraction. Experiments have been made in all departments. The great Castlereagh thought he could work his brain three hundred and sixty-five days in the year, but after awhile broke down and committed suicide; and Wilberforce said of him: “Poor Castlereagh! This is the result of the non-observance of the Sabbath.” A celebrated merchant declared: “I should have been a maniac long ago but for the Sabbath.” The nerves, the brain, the muscles, the bones, the entire physical, intellectual, and moral nature, cry out for the Sabbatic rest. What is true of man is, for the most part, true of the brute. Travellers have found out that they come to their place of

destination sooner when they let their horses rest by the way on the Sabbath. What is the matter with those forlorn creatures harnessed to some of our city cars? Why do they stumble, and stagger, and fall? It is for the lack of the Sabbath rest. In other days, when the herdsmen drove their sheep and cattle from the far West down to the seaboard, it was found out by experiment that those herdsmen and drovers who halted over the seventh day got down sooner to the seaboard than those who passed on without the observance of the holy Sabbath. The fishermen off the coast of Newfoundland declared that those men during the year catch the most fish who stop during the Lord's-day. When I asked the Rocky Mountain locomotive engineer why he changed locomotives when it seemed to be a straight route, he said: "We have to let the locomotive stop and cool off, or the machinery would soon break down." Men who made large quantities of salt were told that if they allowed their kettles to cool over Sunday they would submit themselves to a great deal of damage. The experiment was made, some observing the Sabbath, and some not observing the Sabbath. Those who allowed the fires to go down, and the kettles to cool once a week, were compelled to spend only a few pennies in the way of repairs; while in the cases where no Sabbath was observed, many dollars were demanded for repairs. In other words: intelligent man, and dumb beast, and dead machinery

#### CRY OUT FOR THE LORD'S-DAY.

While the attempt to kill the Sabbath by the stroke of axe, and flail, and the yardstick has beautifully failed, it is proposed in our day to drown the Sabbath by flooding it with secular amusements. They would bury it very decently under the wreath of the target company, and to the music of all Strakosch's brazen instruments. There are to-day, in

the different cities, ten thousand hands and ten thousand pens busy in attempting to cut out the heart of our Christian Sabbath, and leave it a bleeding skeleton of what it once was. The effort is organized and tremendous; and unless the friends of Christ, and the lovers of good order, shall rouse up right speedily, their sermons and their protests will be uttered after the castle is taken. There are cities in the land where the Sabbath has almost perished; and last Sabbath night New York was in full blaze of theatric and operatic entertainment; and it is becoming a practical question whether we, who received a pure Sabbath from the hands of our fathers, shall have piety and pluck enough to give to our children the same blessed inheritance. The eternal God helping us, we will!

I protest against this invasion of the holy Sabbath, in the first place, *because it is a war on Divine enactment*. God says, in Isaiah: "If thou turn away thy foot from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, thou shalt walk upon the high places." What did He mean by "doing thy pleasure?" He referred to secular and worldly amusements. A man told me he was never so much frightened as in the midst of an earthquake, when the beasts of the field bellowed in fear, and even the barn-yard fowls screamed in terror. Well, it was when the earth was shaking and the sky was all full of fire that God made the great announcement: "Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy." Go along through the streets where the theatres are open on a Sabbath night; go up on the steps; enter the boxes of those places of entertainment, and tell me if that is keeping the Sabbath holy. "O," says some one: "God won't be displeased with a grand sacred concert." A gentleman who was present at a "grand sacred concert" last Sabbath night in one of the theatres of our great cities, said, that during the exercises, there were comic and sentimental songs, interspersed with coarse jokes;

and there were dancers, and a farce, and tight-rope walking, and a trapeze performance. I suppose it was a holy dance, and a consecrated tight-rope. I am not certain, however, about that; but this I know, it was a

“GRAND SACRED CONCERT.”

We hear a great deal of talk about “the rights of the people” to have just such amusements on Sunday as they want to have. I wonder if the Lord has any rights. You rule your family, the governor rules the State, the President rules the whole land; I wonder if the Lord has a right to rule the nations and make the enactment: “Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy,” and if there is any appeal to a higher court from that decision, and if the men who are warring against that enactment are not guilty of high treason against the Maker of heaven and earth. They have in our cities put God on trial. It has been the theatres and the opera-houses of the land, plaintiffs, *versus* the Lord Almighty, defendant, and the suit has been begun, and who shall come out ahead, you know. Whether it be popular or unpopular, I now announce it as my opinion that *the people have no rights save those which the great Jehovah gives them*. He has never given the right to man to break His holy Sabbath, and as long as His throne stands He never will give that right.

The prophet asks a question which I can easily answer: “Will a man rob God?” Yes. They robbed Him last Sunday night at the theatres and the opera-houses, and I charge upon them the infamous and high-handed larceny. I believe with the sailor. The crew had been discharged from the vessel because they would not work while they were in port on the Lord’s-day. The captain went out to get sailors. He found one man, and he said to him: “Will you serve me on the Sabbath?” “No.” “Why not?” “Well,” replied the old sailor, “a man who will

rob God Almighty of His Sabbath, would rob me of my wages if he got a chance." O, it is dastardly mean when we break the Sabbath. Suppose you had seven oranges, and you gave to your child six of them, putting the other orange in your pocket for yourself, and you should find that the child had not been satisfied with the six oranges, and had come and stolen your seventh. That is precisely what men do when they break the Sabbath. Suppose you were poor, and you came to a dry-goods merchant, and asked for some cloth for garments, and he should say: "I'll give you six yards;" and while he was off from the counter binding up the six yards you should go behind the counter and steal one additional yard. That is what every man does when he breaks the Lord's Sabbath. God gives us six days out of seven, reserving one for Himself, and you will not let Him have it. It is mean beyond all computation.

Again: I am opposed to this desecration of the Sabbath by secular entertainments *because it is a war on the statutes of our State*. The law says:

"It shall not be lawful to exhibit, on the first day of the week, commonly called Sunday, to the public, in any building, garden, grounds, concert-room, or other room or place within the city and county of New York, any interlude, tragedy, comedy, opera, ballet, play, farce, negro minstrelsy, negro or other dancing, or any other entertainment of the stage, or any part or parts therein, or any equestrian circus, or dramatic performance of jugglers, acrobats, or rope-dancing."

Was there ever a plainer enactment than that? Who made the law? You, who at the ballot-boxes decided who should go to Albany and sit in the Legislature. They made the law for you and for your families, and now I say that any man who attempts to override that law insults you, and me, and every man who has the right of suffrage in the State

of New York. What have been the circumstances? The low manager of a low theatre in New York had an entertainment on a Sabbath night. The police came in and arrested him. The District Attorney did not, however, pursue the case. After awhile the prominent leader of a prominent opera company advertises his entertainment. People of all professions and occupations protest against it. Judge Donohue comes along and issues an injunction forbidding the police in any wise to interfere with these Sabbath amusements. Judge Donohue says:

"I hereby order that the defendants, and each of them, their agents and servants, as well as the captains, sergeants, and officers of the Police Department of the city of New York, refrain from interrupting, or in any way interfering with, any dramatic or operatic performance that plaintiff may arrange, give, or conduct at any of the theatres [in the city of New York, during any Sunday, and from arresting the plaintiff, or any other person or *employé* of the plaintiff aiding in such dramatic or operatic performance on Sunday for participating in such performance, and from interfering in any way or manner with the plaintiff's business as director of the Strakosch Italian Opera Company, an orchestral company, and a dramatic and operatic company performing on Sundays."

That injunction hovered over the city for three weeks, Judge Donohue, meanwhile, standing in defiance of the voters of New York, and of the State legislature. Some say, as by quibble, it was necessary for him to entertain the motion, and to issue the injunction. Was it necessary for him for three weeks to be deciding this question? On Wednesday or Thursday the injunction was lifted. Alas! that it was not lifted sooner. What a pity it was that it took three whole weeks, during which secular amusements were tramping upon God's holy day, to find out that the

legislature of the State of New York have a right to forbid the opening of the theatres on the Lord's-day.

Still further: I protest against this recent invasion of the Sabbath, *because it is a foreign war*. Now, if you heard at this moment the booming of a gun in the harbour, or a shell from some foreign frigate should drop into our streets, how long would you keep your seats in the Tabernacle? You would want to face the foe, and every gun that could be managed would be brought in use, and every ship that could be brought out of the Navy Yard would swing from her anchorage, and the question would be decided. You do not want a foreign war, and yet I have to tell you that this invasion of God's holy day is a foreign war. As among our own native-born population there are two classes—the good and the bad; so it is with the people who come from other shores—there are the law-abiding and the lawless. The former are welcome here. The more of them the better we like it. In this particular Church there are representatives of all lands. I believe God intended our national heart to throb with blood of all people! But let not the lawless come from other shores, expecting to break down our Sabbath, and institute in the place of it a foreign Sabbath.

#### HOW DO YOU FEEL,

ye who have been brought up amid the hills of New England, about giving up the American Sabbath? Ye who spent your childhood under the shadow of the Adirondacks or the Catskills; ye who were born on the banks of the Tennessee, or Ohio, or Cumberland, how do you feel about giving up the American Sabbath? You say: "We shall not give it up. We mean to defend it, as long as there is left any strength in our arm or any blood in our heart!" Do not bring your Spanish Sabbath here. Do not bring your Italian Sabbath here. Do not bring your French Sabbath here. Do not



bring your German Sabbath here. It shall be for us and our children for ever a pure, consecrated, Christian, American Sabbath.

I will make a comparison between the Sabbath as some of you have known it, and the Sabbath of Paris. I speak from observation. On Sabbath morning I was aroused in Paris by a great sound in the street. I said: "What is this?" "O," they said, "this is Sunday." An unusual rattle of vehicles of all sorts. The voices seemed more boisterous than on other days. People running to and fro, with baskets and bundles, to get to the rail-trains or gardens. It seemed as if all the vehicles in Paris, of whatever sort, had turned out for the holiday. The *Champs Elysées* one great mob of pleasure-seeking people. Balloons flying. Parrots chattering. Foot-balls rolling. Pedlars hawking their knick-knacks through the streets. Punch and Judy shows in a score of places, each one with a shouting audience. Hand organs, cymbals, and every kind of racket, musical and unmusical. When the evening came down all the theatres were in full blaze of music and full blaze of light. The wine stores and saloons were thronged with an unusual number of customers. At even-tide I stood and watched the excursionists coming home—fagged-out men, women, and children, a gulf-stream of fatigue, irritability, and wretchedness; for I should think it would take three or four days to get over that miserable way of Sundaying. It seemed more like an American Fourth of July than a Christian Sabbath.

Now, in contrast, I present one of the Sabbaths in one of our best American cities. Holy silence coming down with the day dawn. Business men more deliberately looking into the faces of their children, and talking to them about their present and future welfare. Men sit longer at the table in the morning, because the stores are not to be opened,

and the mechanical tools are not to be taken up. A hymn is sung. There are congratulation and good cheer all through the house. The streets silent until ten o'clock, when there is a regular, orderly tramp churchward. Houses of God, vocal with thanksgivings for mercies received, with prayers for comfort, with charities for the poor. Rest for the body. Rest for the soul. The nerves quieted, the temples cooled, the mind cleared, the soul strengthened, and our entire population turned out on Monday morning ten years younger, better prepared for the duties of this life, better prepared for the life that is to come.

WHICH DO YOU LIKE BEST,

the American Sabbath or the Parisian Sabbath? Do you know in what boat the Sabbath came across the seas and landed on our shores? It was in the *Mayflower*. Do you know in what boat the Sabbath will leave us, if it ever goes? It will be in the ark that floats over a deluge of national iniquity.

Still further: I protest against this recent invasion of the Lord's day, *because it wrongs a vast multitude of employés of their rest*. The play actors and actresses can have their rest between their engagements; but how about the scene-shifters, the ballet-dancers, the call-boys, the innumerable attendants and supernumeraries of the American theatre? Where is their Sunday to come from? They are paid small salaries at the best. Alas for them! You see them on the stage in tinsel and tassel with halberds, or you see them in gauze whirling in toe-tortures, and you mistake them for fairies or queens; but after twelve o'clock at night you may see them trudging through the streets in faded dress, shivering and tired, a bundle under their arms, seeking their homes in the garrets and cellars of the city. Now, you propose to take from thousands of these *employés* through-



out this country, not only all opportunity of moral culture, but all opportunity of physical rest. For God's sake let the crushing Juggernaut stop at least one day in seven.

Again: I oppose this modern invasion of the Christian Sabbath *because it is a war on the spiritual welfare of the people.* You have a body? Yes. You have a mind? Yes. You have a soul? Yes. Which of the theatres on the Sabbath-day will give that soul any culture? I heard of a lady who came to enact a play on the boards of a Philadelphia theatre. Her conscience so wrought upon her while she stood there, that instead of attending to the play she sang:

"Rock of ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in Thee."

It was a rare occurrence. Such things are not often witnessed or heard in the American theatre. Now, admitting that a man has a spiritual and immortal nature, which one of the theatres will culture it? Which one of the Sabbath performances in a theatre will remind men of the fact that unless they are born again they cannot see the kingdom of God? Will the music of the *Grand Duchesse* help people at last to sing the song of the one hundred and forty and four thousand? Let the theatres of the country go on Sabbath after Sabbath for years, and in all that number of years how many Christians will they, under God, produce? Not one. Besides that, if you gentlemen of the theatre and the opera have six days in the week in which to exercise your evangelical and heavenly influence, ought you not to allow Christian institutions to have twenty-four hours? Is it unreasonable to demand that if you have six days for the body and the intellect, we have one day at least for our immortal soul? Or, to put it in another shape, do you not really think that our imperishable soul is worth at least one-seventh as much as our perishable

body? An artist has three gems—a cornelian, an amethyst, and a diamond. He has to cut them and to set them. Which one is he most particular about? Now, the cornelian is the body, the amethyst is the intellect, the diamond is the soul. For the two former you propose six days of opportunity, while you offer no opportunity at all for the last, which is in value as compared with the others like one hundred thousand million dollars to one farthing. Besides that, you must not forget that nine-tenths, aye, ninety-nine one-hundredths of all the Christian effort of this country is put forth on the Lord's-day. That is the day in which the asylums, and the hospitals, and the prisons, are visited by Christian men. That is the day when the youth of our country get their chief religious information. That is the day when the most of the charities are collected. That is the day when, under the blast of fifty thousand American pulpits, the sin of the land is assaulted, and men are summoned to repent. When you make war upon any part of God's day, you make war upon the asylums, and the penitentiaries, and the hospitals, and the reform associations, and the homes of the destitute, and the Church of the living God, which is the pillar and the ground of the truth.

I am opposed to the invasion of the Sabbath, *because it is a war on our political institutions*. When the Sabbath goes down, the Republic goes down. Men who are not willing to obey God's law in regard to Sabbath observance are not fit to govern themselves. Sabbath-breaking means dissoluteness, and dissoluteness is incompatible with self-government. What is the matter with Republicanism in Italy and in Spain? No Sabbath. For ages they wanted a Republic in France. After awhile they got a Republic; but one day Napoleon III., with his cavalry, rode through the streets, and down went the Republic under the clattering hoofs. They have a Republic there again; but every time a sick

young man at Chiselhurst looks across the English Channel, the French government quakes from the Tuilleries to Versailles. France never will have a permanent Republic until she quits her roystering Sabbaths, and devotes one day in every week to the recognition of God and sacred institutions.

#### ABOLISH THE SABBATH

and you abolish your religious privileges. Let the bad work go on, and you have "the Commune," and you have "the Revolution," and you have the sun of national prosperity going down in darkness and blood. From that reign of terror may the God of Lexington and Gettysburgh deliver us!

Still further: I am opposed to this invasion of the Sabbath *because it is unfair, and it is partial*. Why has it been, during the past few weeks, that some of the theatres have been allowed to be open and others not? Why not have all open? While some of the operas and theatres were open, some of our friends in the other theatres, although they were willing to bless society on Sunday with their dances and their farces, had to sit in their "green-rooms," chewing their beards and "wasting their sweetness on the desert air." Go further and see how unfair it is. While operas and theatres in different cities are allowed to be open on the Sabbath day, dry-goods establishments must be closed, and plumbing establishments, and the butcher's, and the baker's, and the shoemaker's, and the hardware stores. Now tell me by what law of justice you compel me to shut the door of my store while you keep open the door of your theatre? Are the men and women connected with the theatrical profession so much better than other people, that you give them especial privilege? Are the ballet girls better than the milliners? Are these men who stalk the stage, clutching bloody daggers and writing death-warrants with quills that have no ink in them, and manufacturing thunder with a

Chinese gong—are they better than people who sell silks, and harness, and cutlery? Ladies and gentlemen of the theatre and opera, in what school did you get morals so far superior to all the rest of the people? May it please your honours, Judges of the Supreme Court, when you give to the opera and the theatre the right to open on the Sabbath day, you ought to give, at the same time, the right to all commercial establishments to be open, and to all mechanical establishments to be open. What is right in the one case is right in all the cases. But come now and be honest, you men who manage theatres and operas, and confess that you do not care anything at all about the moral welfare of the people, but you only want more dollars. Indeed, the leader of one of the operas says in the public prints that unless he can have the theatre open on the Lord's day he cannot afford to keep it running. We are told by the operatic and theatrical leaders that they must get money on Sabbath nights in order to pay the deficits of the other nights of the week. Now, in answer to that I say, that if men cannot manage our theatres without breaking the Lord's day, they had better all

#### GO INTO BANKRUPTCY

together. We will never surrender our Christian Sabbath for the purpose of helping these violators pay their expenses. While there may be a difference of opinion among some people about the propriety of having theatricals during the week, I think all lovers of good order must unite in one solid, unanimous resistance to this infernal attempt to massacre the Christian Sabbath.

I congratulate our city that, so far, we have almost entirely escaped the invasion, and my confidence is in our mayor, and our judges, and our police officers that the laws of the State of New York will be executed. Above all, my confidence is

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in the good hand of God that has been over this city since its foundation. But I call this day upon all those who befriend Christian principles, and those who love our political freedom, to stand in solid phalanx in this Thermopylae of our American history; for I believe as certainly as I stand here that the triumph or overthrow of American institutions depends upon this Sabbatic contest. Bring your voices, your pens, your printing-presses, and your pulpits into the Lord's artillery corps for the defence of our holy day. To-day, in your families and in your Sabbath-schools, recite: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." Decree before high heaven that this war on your religious rights and the cradles of your children shall bring ignominious defeat to the enemies of God and the public weal. For those who die in the contest battling for the right we shall chisel the epitaph: "These are they who came out of great tribulation, and had their robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb." But for that one who shall prove in this moral crisis recreant to God and the Church there shall be no honourable epitaph. He shall not be worthy even of a burial-place in all this free land; but perhaps some steam-tug, at midnight, may carry out his poor remains and drop them in the sea, where the lawless winds which keep no Sunday will gallop over the grave of him who lived and died a traitor to God, the Church, and the free institutions of America. Long live the Christian Sabbath! (Voices: "Amen, amen.") Perish for ever all attempt to overthrow it!

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## CHRISTIAN GYMNASTICS.

"They that use this world, as not abusing it."—1 *Cor.* vii. 31.

**M**Y text implies that there is a lawful use of the world as well as an unlawful abuse of it, and the difference between the man Christian and the man un-Christian is that in the former case the man masters the world, while in the latter case the world masters him. For whom did God make this grand and beautiful world? For whom this wonderful expenditure of colour, this gracefulness of line, this mosaic of the ground, this fresco of the sky, this glowing fruitage of orchard and vineyard, this full orchestra of the tempest, in which the tree branches flute, and the winds trumpet, and the thunders drum, and all the splendours of earth and sky come clashing their cymbals? For whom did God spring the arched bridge of colours resting upon buttresses of broken stormcloud? For whom did He gather the upholstery of fire around the window of the setting sun? For all men; but more especially for His own dear children.

If you build a large mansion, and spread a great feast after it to celebrate the completion of the structure, do you allow strangers to come in and occupy the place while you thrust your own children in the kitchen, or the barns, or the fields? Oh, no. You say: "I am very glad to see strangers in my mansion, but my own sons and daughters shall have the first right there." Now, God has built this grand mansion of a world, and He has spread a glorious feast in it, and while those who are strangers to His grace may come in, I think that God especially intends to give the advantage to His own children, those who are the sons and the daughters of the Lord Almighty, those who through grace can look up and say: "Abba Father." You cannot make me believe that God gives more advantages to the world than

He gives to the Church bought by His own blood. If, therefore, people of the world have looked with dolorous sympathy upon this host who have this day united with the Church, and have said: "Those new converts are going down into privation and into hardship. Why did not they tarry a little longer in the world and have some of its enjoyments, and amusements, and recreations?"—I say to such men of the world: "You are greatly mistaken," and before I get through I will show that those people who stay out of the kingdom of God have the hardships and self-denials, while those who come in have the joys and satisfactions.

This morning, in the name of the King of Heaven and earth, I serve a writ of ejectment upon all the sinful and polluted who have squatted on the domain of earthly pleasure as though it belonged to them, while I claim, in behalf of the good and the pure, and the true, the eternal inheritance which God has given them.

Hitherto Christian philanthropists, clerical and lay, have busied themselves chiefly in denouncing sinful amusements; but I feel we have no right to stand before men and women in whose hearts there is a desire for recreation, amounting to positive necessity, denouncing this and that, and the other thing, when we do not propose to give them something better. God helping me this morning, and with reference to my last account, I shall enter upon a sphere not usual in sermonizing, but a subject which I think ought to be presented at this time. I propose now to lay before you some of

#### THE AMUSEMENTS AND RECREATIONS

which are not only innocent but positively helpful and advantageous.

In the first place, I commend, among in-door recreations, music, vocal and instrumental. Among things created was

the bird, so that the earth might have music at the start. This world, which began with so sweet a serenade, is finally to be demolished amid the ringing blast of the archangel's trumpet, so that as there was music at the start so there shall be music at the close. While this heavenly art has often been dragged into the uses of superstition and dissipation, we all know it may be the means of high moral culture. O, it is a grand thing to have our children brought up amid the sound of cultured voices and amid the melody of musical instruments. There is in this art an indescribable fascination for the household. Let all those families who have the means to afford it, have flute, or harp, or piano, or organ. As soon as the hand is large enough to compass the keys, teach it how to pick out the melody. Let all our young men try this heavenly art upon their nature. Those who have gone into it fully have found it illimitable recreation and amusement. Dark days, stormy nights, seasons of sickness, business disasters, will do little towards depressing the soul which can gallop off over musical keys or soar in jubilant lay. It will cure pain. It will rest fatigue. It will quell passion. It will revive health. It will reclaim dissipation. It will strengthen the immortal soul. In the battle of Waterloo, Wellington saw that the Highlanders were falling back. He said: "What is the matter there?" He was told that the band of music had ceased playing, and he called up the pipers and ordered them to strike up an inspiring air, and no sooner did they strike the air than the Highlanders were rallied and helped win the day. O, ye who have been routed in the conflicts of life, try by the force of music to rally your scattered battalions.

I am glad to know that in our great cities there is hardly a night in which there are not concerts, where, with the best musical instruments, and the sweetest voices, people may find entertainment. Patronize such entertainments when



they are afforded you. Buy season tickets, if you can, for the "Philharmonic" and the "Handel and Haydn Societies." Feel that the dollar and a half or two dollars that you spend for the purpose of hearing an artist play or sing is a profitable investment. Let your Steinway Halls and your Academies of Music roar with the acclamation of appreciative audiences assembled at the concert or the oratorio.

Still further: I commend as worthy of your support

#### THE GYMNASIUM.

This institution is gaining in favour every year, and I know of nothing more free from dissipation, or more calculated to recuperate the physical and mental energies. While there are a good many people who have employed this institution, there is a vast number who are ignorant of its excellencies. There are men with cramped chests, and weak sides, and despondent spirits, who, through that institution, might be roused up to exuberance and exhilaration of life. There are many Christian people despondent from year to year who might, through such an institution, be benefited in their spiritual relations. There are Christian men who write hard things against their immortal souls when there is nothing the matter with them but an incompetent liver. There are Christian people who seem to think that it is a good sign to be poorly, and because Richard Baxter and Robert Hall were invalids, they think that by the same sickliness they may come to the same grandeur of character. I want to tell the Christian people of my congregation that God will hold you responsible for your invalidism if it is your fault, and when through right exercise and prudence you might be athletic and well. The effect of the body upon the soul you acknowledge. Put a man of mild disposition upon the animal diet of which the Indian partakes, and in a little while his blood will change its chemical proportions. It will become like

unto the blood of the lion, or the tiger, or the bear, while his disposition will change and become fierce, cruel, and unrelenting. The body has a powerful effect upon the soul.

There are good people whose ideas of heaven are all shut out with clouds of tobacco smoke. There are people who dare to shatter the physical vase in which God has put the jewel of eternity. There are men with great hearts and intellects in bodies worn out by their own neglects—magnificent machinery, capable of propelling a *Great Eastern* across the Atlantic, yet fastened in a racketty North River propeller. Martin Luther was so mighty for God, first, because he had a noble soul, and secondly, because he had a muscular development which would have enabled him to thrash any five of his persecutors, if it had been Christian so to do. Physical development, which merely shows itself in fabulous lifting, or in perilous rope-walking, or in pugilistic encounter, excites only our contempt; but we confess to great admiration for the man who has a great soul in an athletic body, every nerve, muscle, and bone of which is consecrated to right uses. O, it seems to me outrageous that men, through neglect, should allow their physical health to go down beyond repair, spending the rest of their life, not in some great enterprise for God and the world, but in studying what is the best thing to take for dyspepsia! A ship which ought, with all sails set and every man at his post, be carrying a rich cargo for eternity, employing all its men in stopping up leakages. When you may, through the gymnasium, work off your spleen and your querulousness, and one-half of your physical and mental ailments, do not turn your back upon such a grand medicament.

Still further: I commend to you a large class of

#### PARLOUR GAMES AND RECREATIONS.

There is a way of making our homes a hundredfold more

attractive than they are now. Those parents cannot expect to keep their children away from outside dissipations unless they make the domestic circle brighter than anything they can find outside of it. Do not, then, sit in your home surly and unsympathetic and with a half-condemnatory look, because of the sportfulness of your children. You were young once yourself; let your children be young. Because your eyes are dim and your ankles are stiff, do not denounce sportfulness in those upon whose eyes there is the first lustre, and in whose foot there is the bounding joy of robust health. I thank God that in our drawing-rooms and in our parlours there are innumerable games and sports which have not upon them the least taint of iniquity. Light up all your homes with innocent hilarities. Do not sit down with the rheumatism, wondering how children could go on so! Rather thank God that their hearts are so light, and their laughter is so free, and that their cheeks are so ruddy, and that their expectations are so radiant. The night will come soon enough, and the heart-break, and the pang, and the desolation—it will come soon enough for the dear children. But when the storm actually clouds the sky it will be time enough for you to haul out your reef tackles. Carry, then, into your homes not only the innocent sports and games which are the inventions of our own day, but the games which come down with the sportfulness of all the past ages. Chess, and charades, and tableaux, and battledore, and calisthenics, and all those amusements which the young people of our homes know so well how to contrive. Then there will be the parlour socialities—groups of people assembled in your homes, with wit, and mimicry, and joviality, filling the room with joy from the door to the mantel, and from the carpet to the ceiling. Oh, is there any exhilaration like a score of genial souls in one room, each one adding a contribution of his own individual merriment to the aggre-

gation of general hilarity. Suppose you want to go abroad in the city, then you will find the panorama and the art gallery—Schaus's, and Snedecor's, and Avery's exquisite collections of pictures. You will find the Metropolitan Museum and the Historical Society rooms full of rare curiosities, and scores of places which can stand plainly the test of the principles I have laid down in former discourses as to what is right and wrong in amusements. You will find the lecturing hall which has been honoured by the names of Agassiz in natural history, Doremus in chemistry, Boynton in geology, Dr. Mitchell in astronomy, John B. Gough in moral reform, and scores and hundreds of men who have poured their wit, and genius, and ingenuity through that particular channel upon the hearts, and consciences, and imaginations of men, setting this country fifty years further in advance than it would have been without the lecture platform.

I rejoice in the popularization of outdoor sports. I hail the croquet ground, and the fisherman's rod, and the sportsman's gun. In our cities life is so unhealthy and unnatural : when the census-taker represents a city as having four hundred thousand inhabitants there are only two hundred thousand, since it takes at least two men to amount to one man, so depleting, and unnerving, and exhausting is this metropolitan life.

#### WE WANT MORE FRESH AIR,

more sunlight, more of the *abandon* of field sports. I cry out for it in behalf of the Church of God as well as in behalf of secular interests. I wish that this winter our ponds, and our rivers, and our Capitoline Grounds might be all a-quake with the heel and the shout of the swift skater. I wish that when the warm weather comes the graceful oar might dip the stream, and the evening tide be resonant of

the boatman's song, the bright prow splitting the crystal-line billow. We shall have the smooth and grassy lawn, and we will call out people of all occupations and professions, and ask them to join in the ball player's sport. You will come back from these out-door exercises and recreations with strength in your arm, and colour in your cheek, and a flash in your eye, and courage in your heart. In this great battle that is opening against the kingdom of darkness we want not only a consecrated soul, but a strong arm, and stout lungs, and mighty muscle. I bless God that there are so many recreations that have not on them any taint of iniquity; recreations in which we may engage for the strengthening of the body, for the clearing of the intellect, for the illumination of the soul.

There is still another form of recreation which I commend to you, and that is the pleasure of doing good. I have seen young men, weak, and cross, and sour, and repelling in their disposition, who by one heavenly touch have wakened up and become blessed and buoyant, the ground under their feet and the sky over their heads breaking forth into music. "O," says some young man in the house to-day, "I should like that recreation above all others, but I have not the means." My dear brother, let us take an account of stock this morning. You have a large estate, if you only realized it. Two hands. Two feet. You will have, perhaps, during the next year at least ten dollars for charitable contribution. You will have twenty-five hundred cheerful looks, if you want to employ them. You will have five thousand pleasant words if you want to speak them. Now, what an amount that is to start with. You go out to-morrow morning and you see a case of real destitution by the wayside. You give him two cents. The blind man hears the pennies rattle in his hat, and he says: "Thank you, sir; God bless you." You pass down the street, trying to look indifferent; but

you feel from the very depth of your soul a profound satisfaction that you made that man happy. You go on still further, and find a poor boy with a wheel-barrow, trying to get it up on the curbstone. He fails in the attempt. You say: "Stand back, my lad; let me try." You push it up on the curbstone for him, and pass on. He wonders who that well-dressed man was that helped him. You did a kindness to the boy, but you did a great joy to your own soul. You will not get over it all the week. On the street, to-morrow morning, you will see a sick man passing along. "Ah," you say, "what can I do to make this man happy? He certainly does not want money; he is not poor, but he is sick." Give him one of those twenty-five hundred cheerful looks that you have garnered up for the whole year. Look joy and hopefulness into his soul. It

WILL THRILL HIM THROUGH,

and there will be a reaction upon your own soul. Going a little further on, you will come to the store of a friend who is embarrassed in business matters. You will go in and say: "What a fine store you have. I think business will brighten up, and you will have more custom after awhile. I think next spring will bring more prosperity to the country. Good morning." You pass out. You have helped that young man, and you have helped yourself. And that night you go home, you sit by the fire, you talk a little, you sing a little, you laugh a little; you say: "I really don't know what is the matter with me. I never felt so splendidly in my life." I will tell what is the matter with you. You spent only two cents out of the ten dollars; you have contributed one out of twenty-five hundred cheerful looks; you have given ten, fifteen, or twenty of the five thousand pleasant words you are going to speak during the year; you have with your own hands

helped the boy with the wheelbarrow, and you feel in body, mind, and soul the thrill of that recreation. Which do you think was the happier—Colonel Gardiner, who sat with his elbow on a table spread with all extravagant viands, looking off at a dog on the rug, saying: "How I would like to change places with him; I be the dog and he be Colonel Gardiner;" or those two Moravian missionaries who wanted to go into the lazaretto for the sake of attending the sick, and they were told: "If you go in there you will never come out. We never allow anyone to come out, for they would bring the contagion." Then they made their wills and went in, first to help the sick and then to die. Which was the happier—Colonel Gardiner or the Moravian missionaries dying for others? Was it all sacrifice when the missionaries wanted to bring the Gospel to the negroes at the Barbadoes, and, being denied the privilege, sold themselves into slavery, standing side by side, and lying side by side down in the very ditch of suffering, in order that they might bring those men up to life, and God, and heaven? O there is a thrill in the joy of doing good. It is the most magnificent recreation to which a man ever puts his hand, or his head, or his heart.

But before closing, I want to impress upon you that mere secular amusement and entertainment are not a fit foundation for your soul to build on. Have you never had in your own life illustrations of the fact that worldly amusements are not sufficient, and that the pleasures of this life are, after all, evanescent, and the morning that opens most brightly may end in the darkest night? I know there are those in this audience who seek in the pleasures of this world their chief satisfaction; and I want to tell them of the mistake they are making before they wake up in everlasting disappointment. I had an illustration in my own life of

## HOW EVANESCENT IS EARTHLY PLEASURE,

and how that which opens very brightly may end in darkness, and gloom, and trouble. I had read in books illustrations of the kind, but I never saw any that was as powerful as that which I had in my own life. Just after going to Philadelphia, and while I was yet ignorant of all the surroundings of that city, one Monday morning, fatigued somewhat with the duties of the previous Sabbath, I went out for the purpose of recreation, taking in all, my wife, my only daughter, my elder sister Sarah and her daughter, who was a young lady. It was a beautiful June morning. Passing along by the Schuylkill river we saw some pleasure-boats waiting for excursionists; and one of our party said: "Suppose we take a row on the river." I said: "Well," and in two minutes were all aboard—five of us in all. There had been a freshet some days before, and the stream was very violent. I laid hold of the oars and pulled away, and there was laughter, and shout, and joy. O, it was a very gay party. I was pulling away with all my strength, when I heard a shout from the shore, and I saw a waving of the hand, as much as to say: "Stop! stop!" I looked back, and I saw we were within a few yards of the awful plunge over the dam—the dam that reaches across the Schuylkill. With a cry to God for help and an agony that I can never describe, I laid on to the oars and tried to put back. It was too late! We went over with an awful plunge, the boat capsizing as we went. None of us being able to swim, we clung to the rim of the upset boat, save two—my wife, who was drawn under the dam instantly, and my child, who sank. From the shore, very soon boats came, but it seemed like many hours. The survivors of the party got into the boat, and we looked around for the fairest and the best in all the group, but she was gone. And then I saw under the wave the straw hat of my little child, and I



clutched for it as with a death grip, and I hauled her in black with strangulation. There were five of us who first got into the boat, but there were only four of us who landed. For six days and nights the gunners stood firing the cannon across that river, the artillerymen expecting by the disturbance of the air to raise the body from the bottom of the river. They succeeded; but O! what a change between that bright June morning when we went out with laughter and song, and that afternoon when we came across the Schuylkill bridge in a close carriage, four of us; my half-dead and motherless child, wrapped in flannels, lying on my lap. O God upon such a bright morning, did there ever drop such a horrible night?

I learned a lesson that day which I teach this day to you, and that is, you cannot depend too much upon the pleasures and the amusements of this life. O people of the world, learn this: that while the stream of earthly pleasure may break down into darkness and into death, the river of God's comfort and salvation flows on all through this world, emptying at last into the boundless, fathomless ocean of eternal joy. May God bring you this day into the soft and beautiful current. Only a few strokes of the oar and you will be landed.

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### STEERING BETWEEN THE ROCKS.

"They shall teach my people the difference between the holy and profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean."  
—*Ezek.* xliv. 23.

IN pursuance of that authority, I come to-day to draw the line between right and wrong amusements. Indeed, it is a line drawn by the hand of God, and reaching from eternity to eternity. On one side of the line it is all right, and on the other side of the line it is all wrong. I have for three or four Sabbaths been arguing against that monster of

iniquity, the average American theatre, as it was and is. The nine arguments I have brought against it have in no-wise been answered, save by scurrility, and vulgarity, and low abuse, which, instead of overthrowing the position I have taken, only strongly illustrate the depraving influence of the American theatre upon its retainers and *employés*. This morning I pass on to lay down certain principles by which you may judge in regard to any amusement or recreation, finding out for yourself whether it is right or whether it is wrong.

I remark, in the first place, that you can judge of the moral character of any amusement by its *healthful result*, or by its *baleful reaction*. There are people who seem made up of hard facts. They are a combination of multiplication tables and statistics. If you show them an exquisite picture, they will begin to discuss the pigments involved in the colouring. If you show them a beautiful rose, they will submit it to a botanical analysis, which is only the *post mortem* examination of a flower. They have no rebound in their nature. They never do anything more than smile. There are no great tides of feeling surging up from the depths of their soul, in billow after billow of reverberating laughter. They seem as if nature had built them by contract, and made a bungling job of it. But, blessed be God, there are people in the world who have bright faces, and whose life is a song, an anthem, a pæan of victory. Even their troubles are like the vines that crawl up the side of a great tower, on the top of which the sunlight sits, and the soft airs of summer hold perpetual carnival. They are the people you like to have come to your house; they are the people I like to have come to my house. If you but touch the hem of their garments,

YOU ARE HEALED.

Now, it is these exhilarant, and sympathetic, and warm-

hearted people that are the most tempted to pernicious amusements. In proportion as a ship is swift, it wants a strong helmsman; in proportion as a horse is gay, it wants a stout driver; and these people of exuberant nature will do well to look at the reaction of all their amusements. If an amusement sends you home at night nervous, so that you cannot sleep, and you rise up in the morning, not because you are slept out, but because your duty drags you from your slumbers, you have been where you ought not to have been. There are amusements that send a man next day to his work bloodshot, yawning, stupid, nauseated; and they are wrong kinds of amusement. There are entertainments that give a man disgust with the drudgery of life, with tools because they are not swords, with working aprons because they are not robes, with cattle because they are not infuriated bulls of the arena. If any amusement sends you home longing for a life of romance and thrilling adventure, love that takes poison and shoots itself, moonlight adventures and hair-breadth escapes, you may depend upon it that you are the sacrificed victim of unsanctified pleasure. Our recreations are intended to build us up; and if they pull us down as to our moral or as to our physical strength, you may come to the conclusion that they are in the class spoken of by my text as obnoxious.

Still further: those amusements are wrong which *lead you into expenditure beyond your means*. Money spent in recreation is not thrown away. It is all folly for us to come from a place of amusement feeling that we have wasted our money and time. You may by it have made an investment worth more than the transaction that yielded you a hundred or a thousand dollars. But how many properties have been riddled by costly amusements? The table has been robbed to pay the club. The champagne has cheated the children's wardrobe. The carousing party has burned up the boy's primer. The table-cloth of the

corner saloon is in debt to the wife's faded dress. Excursions that in a day make a tour around a whole month's wages; ladies whose lifetime business it is to "go shopping;" bets on horses and a box at the theatre have their counterparts in uneducated children, bankruptcies that shock the money market and appal the Church, and that send drunkenness staggering across the richly figured carpet of the mansion, and dashing into the mirror, and drowning out the carol of music with

#### THE WHOOPING OF BLOATED SONS

come home to break their old mother's heart.

I saw a beautiful home, where the bell rang violently late at night. The son had been off in sinful indulgences. His comrades were bringing him home. They carried him to the door. They rang the bell at one o'clock in the morning. Father and mother came down. They were waiting for the wandering son, and then the comrades, as soon as the door was opened, threw the prodigal headlong into the doorway, crying: "There he is, drunk as a fool. Ha, ha!" When men go into amusements that they cannot afford, they first borrow what they cannot earn, and then they steal what they cannot borrow. First, they go into embarrassment, and then into lying, and then into theft; and when a man gets as far on as that, he does not stop short of the penitentiary. There is not a prison in the land where there are not victims of unsanctified amusements.

How often I have had parents come to me and ask me to go over to New York and beg their boy off from crimes that he had committed against his employer—the taking of funds out of his employer's till, or the disarrangement of the accounts. Why, he had salary enough to pay all lawful expenditure, but not enough salary to meet his sinful amusements. And again and again I have gone and

implored for the young man, sometimes, alas! the petition all unavailing. Merchant of New York, is there a disarrangement in your accounts? Is there a leakage in your money-drawer? Did not the cash account come out right last night? I will tell you. There is a young man in your store wandering off into bad amusements. The salary you give him may meet lawful expenditures, but not the sinful indulgences in which he has entered, and he takes by theft that which you do not give him in lawful salary.

How brightly the path of unrestrained amusement opens. The young man says: "Now I am off for a good time. Never mind economy. I'll get money somehow. What splendid acting in this theatre to-night! What a fine road! What a beautiful day for a ride! Crack the whip, and over the turnpike! Come, boys, fill high your glasses! Drink! Long life, health, plenty of rides just like this!" Hard-working men hear the clatter of the hoofs, and look up, and say: "Why, I wonder where these fellows get their money from. We have to toil and drudge. They do nothing." To these gay men life is a thrill and an excitement. They stare at other people, and in turn are stared at. The watch-chain jingles. The cup foams. The cheeks flush. The eyes flash. The midnight hears their guffaw. They swagger. They jostle decent men off the sidewalk. They take the name of God in vain. They parody the hymn they learned at their mother's knee; and to all pictures of coming disaster they cry out

"WHO CARES!"

and to the counsel of some Christian friend: "Who are you!" Passing along the street some night, you hear a shriek in a grog-shop, the rattle of the watchman's club, the rush of the police. What is the matter now? O, this reckless young man has been killed in a grog-shop fight. Carry him home

to his father's house. Parents will come down and wash his wounds, and close his eyes in death. They forgive him all he ever did, though he cannot in his silence ask it. The prodigal has got home at last. Mother will go to her little garden, and get the sweetest flowers, and twist them into a chaplet for the silent heart of the wayward boy, and push back from the bloated brow the long locks that were once her pride: And the air will be rent with the father's cry: "O, my son, my son, my poor son! Would God I had died for thee, O, my son, my son!"

I go further, and say those are unchristian amusements which become *the chief business of a man's life*. Life is an earnest thing. Whether we were born in a palace or a hovel; whether we are affluent or pinched, we have to work. If you do not sweat with toil, you will sweat with disease. You have a soul that is to be transfigured amidst the pomp of a judgment-day: and after the sea has sung its last chant, and the mountain shall have come down in an avalanche of rock, you will live, and think, and act, high on a throne where seraphs sing, or deep in a dungeon where demons howl. In a world where there is so much to do for yourselves, and so much to do for others, God pity that man who has nothing to do.

Your sports are merely means to an end. They are alleviations and helps. The arm of toil is the only arm strong enough to bring up the bucket out of the deep well of pleasure. Amusement is only the bower where business and philanthropy rest while on their way to stirring achievements. Amusements are merely the vines that grow about the anvil of toil, and the blossoming of the hammers. Alas for the man who spends his life in labouriously doing nothing, his days in hunting up lounging-places and loungers, his nights in seeking out some gas-lighted foolery! The man who always has on his sporting-jacket, ready to hunt for game in the mountain or fish in the brook with

no time to pray, or work, or read, is not so well off as the greyhound that runs by his side, or the fly-bait with which he whips the stream. A man who does not work

DOES NOT KNOW HOW TO PLAY.

If God had intended us to do nothing but laugh, we would have been all mouth; but He has given us shoulders with which to lift, and hands with which to work, and brains with which to think. The amusements of life are merely the orchestra playing while the great tragedy of life plunges through its five acts—infancy, childhood, manhood, old age, and death. Then *exit* the last chance for mercy. *Enter* the overwhelming realities of an eternal world!

I go further, and say that all those amusements are wrong *which lead into bad company*. If you belong to an organisation where you have to associate with the intemperate, with the unclean, with the abandoned, however well they may be dressed, in the name of God quit it. They will despoil your nature. They will undermine your moral character. They will drop you when you are destroyed. They will give not one cent to support your children when you are dead. They will weep not one tear at your burial. They will chuckle over your damnation.

I had a friend at the West—a rare friend. He was one of the first to welcome me to my new home. To fine personal appearance, he added a generosity, frankness, and ardour of nature that made me love him like a brother. But I saw evil people gathering around him. They came up from the saloons, from the theatres, from the gambling-hells. They plied him with a thousand arts. They seized upon his social nature, and he could not stand the charm. They drove him on the rocks, like a ship full-winged, shivering on the breakers. I used to admonish him. I would say: "Now I wish you would quit these bad habits, and

become a Christian." "O," he would reply: "I would like to; I would like to; but I have gone so far I don't think there is any way back." In his moments of repentance, he would go home and take his little girl of eight years, and embrace her convulsively, and cover her with adornments, and strew around her pictures and toys, and everything that could make her happy; and then, as though hounded by an evil spirit, he would go out to the inflaming cup and the house of shame, like a fool to the correction of stocks.

I was summoned to his death-bed. I hastened. I entered the room. I found him, to my surprise, lying in full everyday dress on the top of the couch. I put out my hand. He grasped it excitedly, and said: "Sit down, Mr. Talmage, right there." I sat down. He said: "Last night I saw my mother, who has been dead twenty years, and she sat just where you sit now. It was no dream. I was wide awake.

THERE WAS NO DELUSION IN THE MATTER.

I saw her just as plainly as I see you. Wife, I wish you would take these strings off of me. There are strings spun all around my body. I wish you would take them off of me." I saw it was delirium. "O," replied his wife: "my dear, there is nothing there, there is nothing there." He went on and said: "Just where you sit, Mr. Talmage, my mother sat. She said to me: 'Roswell, I do wish you would do better.' I got out of bed, put my arms around her, and said: 'Mother, I want to do better. I have been trying to do better. Won't you help me to do better? You used to help me.' No mistake about it, no delusion. I saw her—the cap, and the apron, and the spectacles, just as she used to look twenty years ago. But I do wish you would take these strings away. They annoy me so. I can hardly talk. Won't you take them away?" I knelt down and prayed, conscious of the fact that he did not realize what I was



saying. I got up. I said: "Good-bye; I hope you will be better soon." He said: "Good-bye, good-bye."

That night his soul went to the God who gave it. Arrangements were made for the obsequies. Some said: "Don't bring him in the church; he was too dissolute." "O," I said: "bring him. He was a good friend of mine while he was alive, and I shall stand by him now that he is dead. Bring him to the church."

As I stood in the pulpit, and saw his body coming up through the aisle, I felt as if I could weep tears of blood. I told the people that day: "This man had his virtues, and a good many of them. He had his faults, and a good many of them. But if there is any man in this audience who is without sin, let him cast the first stone at this coffin-lid." On one side the pulpit sat that little child, rosy, sweet-faced, as beautiful as any little child that sat at your table this morning, I warrant you. She looked up wistfully, not knowing the full sorrows of an orphan child. O, her countenance haunts me to-day, like some sweet face looking upon us through a horrid dream. On the other side of the pulpit were the men who had destroyed him. There they sat, hard-visaged, some of them pale from exhausting disease, some of them flushed until it seemed as if the fires of iniquity flamed through the cheek, and crackled the lips. They were the men who had done the work. They were the men who had bound him hand and foot. They had kindled the fires. They had poured the wormwood and gall into that orphan's cup. Did they weep? No. Did they sigh repentingly? No. Did they say: "What a pity that such a brave man should be slain?" No, no; not one bloated hand was lifted to wipe a tear from a bloated cheek. They sat and

#### LOOKED AT THE COFFIN

like vultures gazing at the carcase of a lamb whose heart

they had ripped out. I cried in their ears as plainly as I could: "There is a God, and a judgment-day, and an awful hell for those who destroy their fellows." Did they tremble? O no, no. They went back from the house of God, and that night, though their victim laid in Oakwood Cemetery, I was told that they blasphemed, and they drank, and they gambled, and there was not one less customer in all the houses of iniquity. This destroyed man was a Samson in physical strength, but Delilah sheared him, and the Philistines of evil companionship dug his eyes out, and threw him into the prison of evil habits, and "he made sport for them." But in the hour of his death, he rose up and took hold of the two pillared curses of God against drunkenness and uncleanness, and threw himself forward, until down upon him and his companions there came the thunders of an eternal catastrophe. O, beware of evil companionship. "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment."

I want to give you one more rule. *Any amusement that gives you a distaste for domestic life is bad.* How many bright domestic circles have been broken up by sinful pleasuring! The father went off, the mother went off, the child went off. There are to-day the fragments before me of a great many blasted households. O, if you have wandered away, I would like to charm you back by the sound of that one word "home." Do you not know that you have but little more time to give to domestic welfare? Do you not see, father, that your children are seen to get out into the world, and all the influence for good you are to have over them you are to have now? Death will break in on your conjugal relations, and alas, if you have to stand over the grave of one who perished from your neglect!

I saw a wayward husband standing at the death-bed of his Christian wife, and I saw her point to a ring on her finger, and heard her say to her husband: "Do you see that ring?" He replied: "Yes, I see it." "Well," said she, "do you remember who put it there?" "Yes," said he, "I put it there;" and all the past seemed to rush upon him. By the memory of that day when, in the presence of men and angels, you promised to be faithful in joy and in sorrow, in sickness and in health; by the memory of those pleasant hours when you sat together in your new home talking of a bright future; by the cradle and the joyful hour when one life was spared and another given; by that sick-bed, when the little one lifted up the hands and called for help, and you

KNEW HE MUST DIE,

and he put one arm around each of your necks and brought you very near together in that dying kiss; by the little grave in Greenwood that you never think of without a rush of tears; by the family Bible, where, amidst stories of heavenly love, is the brief but expressive record of births and deaths; by the neglects of the past, and by the agonies of the future; by a judgment-day, when husbands and wives, parents and children, in immortal groups, will stand to be caught up in shining array, or to shrink down into darkness; by all that, I beg you to give to home your best affections. I look in your eyes to-day, and I ask you the question that Gehazi asked of the Shunamite: "Is it well with thee; Is it well with thy husband? Is it well with thy child?" God grant that it may be everlastingly well.

By these four or five rules I want you to try all amusements, and I especially want you to try the American theatre—an institution of which I have been speaking for two or three Sabbaths. It cannot stand the test. It is a war on home, it is a war on physical health, it is a war on man's

moral nature. It is the broad avenue through which tens of thousands press into the grog-shop and the brothel. O, Christian people, stand back from it. Do not say: "I go sometimes;" stand back from it.

The Rev. Dr. Hatfield, of New York, once said to me: "I used to go to the theatre when I was a young man. While I was in town, a Christian friend from the country came to the city. She was visiting at a friend's house. I went down to see her, and found that she had gone to the theatre. I went to the theatre. I got inside, and I looked, and there I saw her fascinated with an objectionable play, and I said: 'Is it possible? this Christian woman looking at such things as these!' although I was not a Christian man, I said: 'I'll never come to the theatre again;' and that was the last time I was ever there. The incongruity of a Christian at the theatre drove me back from all such indulgences."

I cannot let you go to-day until I have said it is not all of life to live. We were not sent into the world merely for gaieties and amusements. Are you prepared for the great future? Hear you not the tolling of old Trinity and the tramp of the Seventh Regiment, and see you not the carrying out of the chief magistrate of our neighbouring city? What does it all mean? A warning to the stout and the well; for he said, "I can endure anything." This morning the sunlight gilds his grave! O, men of the strong arm, and of the stout chest, and of the swarthy development: "Be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."

There were people who heard me preach last Sabbath morning about the theatre who were struck in the heart, and who during the past week have been inquiring the way to God and to Heaven; and there are thousands of people in this audience who are just on the line between the right and the wrong, and I pray God that this may be the day of their disenthralment. Choose Christ this day and live.

## GOD-DEFYING EXTRAVAGANCE OF MODERN SOCIETY.

"Moreover the Lord saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched-forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet: In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet, and their cauls, and their round tires like the moon, the chains, and the bracelets, and the mufflers, the bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the earrings, the rings, and nose-jewels, the changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping pins, the glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the vells."—*Isaiah* iii. 16, 18—23.

**T**HROUGH this window of the text we look in upon the voluptuousness of an ancient city—the description, with a very little variation, as appropriate to New York and Brooklyn as to Jerusalem and Tyre. One might think that Isaiah had before him the fashion-plates, and the head-dresses, and the jewel-caskets, and the dancing-schools, and the drawing-room parties of the present day, and that he foresaw Saratoga, and Brighton, and Long Branch. Through this same window of the text we also see the masculine extravagance and dissipation which always correspond with the feminine. Woman may have greater varieties of apparel, but she lives a quieter life, and, therefore, may have the great varieties and luxuries of dress without impediment. Men would wear as much, if they knew how without interfering with their worldly occupations. The rough jostling of life is inimical to a man's dragging a dress-trail two yards in length, or pending from his ear a diamond cluster. In the time of the text, as well as in all ages of the world, the two sexes were alike in moralities or immoralities.

While in parlour sentimentalities it is well that men defer to women, and women defer to men, in the presence of God, and in the light of eternal responsibilities, the sexes are equal.

Our text takes us twenty-five hundred years back; and

sets us down in an ancient city. It is a bright day, and the ladies are all out. The procession of men and women is moving up and down the gay streets. It is the height of the fashionable season. The sensible people move with so much modesty that they do not attract our attention. But here come the haughty daughters of Jerusalem. They lean forward—they lean very much forward: so far forward as to be unnatural—teetering, wobbling, wriggling, flirting; or, as my text describes it, they “walk with stretched forth necks, walking and mincing as they go.” They have

#### SPENT HOURS BEFORE THE MIRROR

ere starting from home, and have in most astounding style arranged their bonnets, and their veils, and their entire apparel, and now go through the streets, taking more of the pavement than they are entitled to, sweeping along with skirts that the text describes as “round tires like the moon.” See! that is a princess! Look! that is a Damascus sword-maker! Look! that is a Syrian merchant! The jingling of the chains, and the flashing of the head-bands, and the exhibitions of universal swagger attract the attention of the prophet Isaiah, and he brings his camera to bear upon the scene, and takes a picture for all the ages. But where is that scene? Vanished. Where are those gay streets? Vermin-covered population pass through them. Where are the hands, and the necks, and the foreheads, and the feet that sported all that magnificence? Ashes! Ashes!

Taking my text as a starting-point, this morning I come out to talk to you about the God-defying extravagance of modern society. For the refinements, and the elegancies, and adornments of life, I cast my vote. While I was thinking over this subject, there was handed into my house a basket of flowers, paradisiacal in their beauty. White-calla

with a green background of begonia; heliotropes nestling among geraniums; sepal, corolla, and perianth showed the touch of God's fingers. In the snow of the camellia, in the fire-dye of the rose, in the sky-blue of the English violet, I learned that God loves adornment. He might have made this earth so as to satisfy the gross demands of sense, but left it without adornment or attraction. Instead of the variegated colours of the seasons, the earth might have worn a dress of unchanging dull brown. The trees might have yet brought forth their fruit without the prophecy of leaf in blossom. Niagara might have let down its waters or gradual descent without thunder and winged spray. But no. Look out, on some summer morning, after a heavy night-dew, and see whether or not God loves jewels. Put a snow-flake under a microscope, and see whether God does not love exquisite architecture. He decreed that the breast-plate of the priest in olden times should have a wreath of gold, and the hem of his garment should be worked into figures of pomegranate.

#### WHEN THE WORLD SLEEPS

God blankets it with the brilliants of the night sky, and when it wakes he washes it in the burnished laver of the sunrise.

But it is absolutely necessary that we draw a line between that which is the lawful use of beautiful adornment and that extravagance which is the source of so much crime, wretchedness, and abomination in our day. That is sinful extravagance when you go into anything beyond your means. That which is right for one may be wrong for another. That which is lawful expense for a queen may be sinful outlay for a duchess. That which may be economy for you with larger income may be squandering for me with smaller

income. But when men and women cross over the line which separates between what they can pay for, and still keep a sufficiency to meet moral obligation on the one hand, and, on the other hand, that extravagance which one's means cannot compass, they have passed from the innocent into the culpable. Across that line have gone "a multitude that no man can number."

We judge of what we ought to have by what other people have. If they have a sumptuous table, and fine residence, and gay turn-out, and exquisite apparel, and brilliant surroundings, we must have them, irrespective of our capacity to stand the expense. We throw ourselves down in despair because other people have a seal-skin coat, and we have an ordinary one; because others have diamonds, and we have garnets; because others have Arminster, and we have Brussels; because others have lambrequins, and we have plain curtains. What others have we mean to have anyhow. So there are families hardly able to pay their rent, and in debt to every merchant in the neighbourhood, who sport apparel inapt for their circumstances, and run so near the shore that the first misfortune in business, or the first besiegement of sickness, tosses them into pauperism. There are thousands of families moving from neighbourhood to neighbourhood, staying long enough in each one to exhaust all their capacity to get trusted. They move away because the druggists will give them no more medicine, and the butchers will afford them no more meat, and the bakers will give them no more bread, and the grocers will furnish them with no more sugar until they pay up. Then they suddenly find out that the neighbourhood is unhealthy, and they hire a carman, whom they never pay, to take them to a part of the city where all the druggists, and butchers, and bakers, and grocers, will be glad to see them come in, and sending to them the best rounds of beef, and the best coffee, and the best of everything, until



the slight suspicion comes into their brain that all the pay they will ever get from their customer is the honour of his society. There are about five thousand such thieves in Brooklyn. You see I call it by a plain name, because when a man buys a thing that he does not expect to pay for he is a thief.

There are circumstances where men cannot meet their obligations. It is as honest for some men to fail as it is for other men to succeed. They do their best, and through the misfortunes of life they are thrown, and they cannot pay their debts. That is one thing; but when you go and purchase an article for which you know there is no probability of your ever making payment,

#### YOU ARE A THIEF.

Why don't you save the time of the merchant and the expense of an accountant for him? Why don't you go down some day to his store, and when no one is looking, shoulder the ham and the spare-rib, and in modest silence take them along with you? That would be a lesser crime; for now you get not only the merchant's goods, but you get his time, and you rouse up his expectations. If you must steal, steal so it will be the least possible damage to the trader. John Randolph arose in the American Senate, and stretching himself up to full height, cried out, with a shrill voice: "Mr. Chairman, I have found the philosopher's-stone that turns everything into gold: Pay as you go."

My friends, society has to be reconstructed on this subject. You have no right to ride in a carriage when you owe the wheelwright who furnished the landau, and the horse-dealer who provided the horses, and the harness-maker who caparisoned the gay steeds, and the liveryman who furnished the stabling, and the driver who sits with rosetted hat on

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your coach-box. I am glad to see you ride. The finer your horses and the better your carriage the better it pleases me. But if you are in debt for the equipage, and hopelessly in debt, get down and walk, like the rest of us! It is well to understand that it is not the absolute necessities that we find it so hard to meet, but the fictitious wants. God promises us shelter, but not a palace; and raiment, but not chinchilla; and food, but not canvas-back duck. As long as we have enough to meet the positive necessities of life, we ought to be content until we can afford the superfluities. As soon as you see a man deliberately consent that his outgo shall exceed his income, you may know he has started on the broad road to bankruptcy and moral ruin. The young man who came from the oil-wells in Pennsylvania, having gained a sudden fortune of two millions of dollars, and then ran through the whole of it in less than two years, illustrated on a large scale what some of you, my hearers, are doing on a small scale.

This wholesale extravagance accounts for a great deal of depression in national finances. Aggregates are made up of units, and so long as one half of the people of this country are in debt to the other half, you cannot have a healthy financial condition. The national resources are drawn off, not only for useless extravagances, but for those that are positively pernicious. The theatres of New York cost that city every year two millions of dollars. We spend in this country ninety-five millions of dollars every year for cigars and tobacco. In the United States we expend annually one thousand four hundred and eighty-three millions of dollars for rum. Now, take those facts, and is it strange that our national finances are crazied? If you have an exportation of bread-stuffs four times what you have now, and an importation of gold four times what you have now, there would be no permanent prosperity in this country

until people quit their sinful lavishment, and learn honest economy. You charge it upon Salmon P. Chase, or Boutwell, or Secretary Richardson ;

#### I CHARGE IT UPON YOU—

the men and women who are living beyond your means.

The wide-spread extravagance also accounts for much of the crime. It is the source of many abscondings, bankruptcies, defalcations, and knaveries. The store on Broadway, and the office on Wall-street, are swamped by the residence on Madison-square. The husband and father has his craft capsized because he carries too much sail of point-lace and Antille guipure. That is what destroyed Ketchum and Swartwout, and ten thousand men not so famous. That is what springs the leak in the merchant's money-till, and pulls down your trust companies, and cracks the pistols of your suicides, and halts this nation on its high career of prosperity. I arraign this monster of extravagance in the sight of all the people, and ask you to pelt it with your scorn, and denounce it with your anathema.

The wide-spread extravagance also accounts for much of the pauperism in the country. Who are the individuals and the families who are thrown on your charity? Who has sinned against them so that they suffer? It is often the case that their parents, or their grand-parents, had all luxuries, lived everything up, more than lived everything up, and then died, leaving their families in want. The grand-parents of these beggars supped on Burgundy and woodcock. There are a great many families who have every luxury in life, yet expend every dollar that comes in, and perhaps a few dollars more, not even taking the common Christian prudence of having their lives insured. While they live all is well, but when they die their children are

pitched into the street. I tell you a man has no right to die under such circumstances. It is grand larceny, even his death. If a man has been industrious and economical, and has not a farthing to leave his children as he goes away from them, he has a right to put them in the hands of the Father of the Fatherless, and know they will be cared for; but if you, with every comfort in life, are lavish and improvident, and then depart this life leaving your children to be hurled into pauperism, you deserve to have your bones sold to the medical museum for anatomical specimens, the proceeds to furnish your children bread. I know the subject cuts close. I expected that some of you in high dudgeon would get up and go out. You stand it pretty well. Some of you are

#### MAKING A GREAT DASH IN LIFE,

and after a while will die, leaving your families beggars, and you will expect us ministers of the Gospel to come and stand by your coffin, and lie about your excellencies; but we will not do it. If you send for me, I will tell you what my text will be: "He that provideth not for his own, and especially for those of his own household, is worse than an infidel."

In this day, God has mercifully allowed those of us who have limited income to make provision for our families, through the great life insurance companies all over the land. By some self-denial on our part, we can make this provision for those whom we shall leave behind us. Is there anything so helpless as a woman whose husband has just died, when, with her children at her back, she goes out in this day to fight for bread? Shall she become a menial servant in some one else's household? No; not the one that has been lying on your arm all these years, and filling the household with

joy and light. Shall she sew for a living? God knows that they get but threepence and fourpence for making one garment. Ah no! you had better have your coffin made large enough to take them all with you into that land where they never freeze nor starve. How a man with no surplus of estate, but still enough money to pay the premium on a life insurance policy, can refuse to do it, and then look his children in the face, and say his prayers at night on going to bed, expecting them to be answered, is a mystery to me that I have never been able to fathom.

This extravagance is becoming more and more wide-spread. A statistician has estimated that there are in New York and Brooklyn four thousand five hundred women who expend annually two thousand dollars each in dress. It is no rare thing when the wedding march sounds to see dragging through the aisle a bridal dress that has cost its thousand or fifteen hundred dollars. Things have come to such a pass, that when we cry over sin

#### WE WIPE THE TEARS AWAY

with a hundred-and-fifty dollar pocket-handkerchief. The tendency to extravagance was illustrated wonderfully when the late James Fisk, jun., sent the bridal presents to the home of William M. Tweed, a gentleman now occupying apartments at government expense. Fisk sent an iceberg of frosted silver, polar bears of silver lying down on the handles, polar bears of silver walking over the gold spoons. There were in the house that day forty silver sets of imperial magnificence. There was a diamond set that cost forty-five thousand dollars. There was one dress that had in it thirty-seven yards of silk, with three hundred and eighty-two bows. Hundreds of thousands of dollars expended on that scene.

The reason we have not a multitude of scenes as extravagant is because we have not so much money.

This wicked extravagance shows itself no more forcibly than on the funeral day. No one else seems willing to speak of it, so I shall speak of it. There has been many a man who has died solvent, but has been insolvent before he got under the ground. One would think that the two debts most sacred would be debts to the physician and the undertaker, since they are the last two debts contracted; and yet those two professions are swindled more frequently than any other. In the agitation and excitement the friends come, and they want extraordinary attention, and they want extraordinary expenditure, and then, when the sad scene is past, neglect to make compensation. What are those two professions to do under such circumstances? If a merchant sells goods, and they are not paid for, I understand he can reclaim the goods; but if a man departs this life, and, through his friends, indebtedness is contracted that is not met, there seems to be no relief, for the patient has gone off with the doctor's pills and the undertaker's white slippers. Greenwood, and Laurel Hill, and Mount Auburn, hold to-day thousands of such swindles.

A man dies in our neighbouring city of New York. He has lived a fictitious life, moved amidst splendour, and dies leaving his family not a dollar; but they, poor things! must keep up the same magnificence, and so

#### THEY RESOLVE UPON A GREAT FUNERAL.

The obsequies shall be splendid! I give you no imaginary case. I give you the funeral of a man in up-town New York life, the facts authenticated, and in my pocket. The undertaker was not to blame; he only sold them what they asked

## 432 GOD-DIFFING EXTRAVAGANCE OF MODERN SOCIETY.

far. The only blame was for those who bought when they knew they could not pay.

|                                                               | dols. |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Casket, covered with Lyons velvet, silver mouldings .....     | 850   |
| Heavy plated handles .....                                    | 60    |
| Gold silver plate, engraved in Roman letters.....             | 75    |
| Ten linen scarfs .....                                        | 150   |
| Fleur decorations .....                                       | 225   |
| Music and quartet choir at the house .....                    | 40    |
| Twenty carriages, walking to the cemetery .....               | 140   |
| Then fifteen other important expenditures, amounting to ..... | 336   |
| All the expenditures, added up, being .....                   | 1,876 |

for getting one poor mortal to his last home! Perhaps it would have been all well if they had been able to meet the expenditure; but when it was known they could not, it was a villainy. There are families that you know who, in the effort to meet the ridiculous, outrageous, and wicked customs of society in regard to obsequies, have actually reduced themselves to penury. They put their last dollar in the ground. They wanted bread, and you gave them a stone.

There is in England what they call a funeral reform society. It is high time we had such a reform society in our own country.

This wide-spread extravagance accounts, also, for the poverty of religious institutions. Men pay so much for show they have nothing for God and religion. We pay in this country twenty-two millions of dollars for the great benevolent societies; but what are twenty-two millions of dollars compared with the ninety-five millions for cigars and tobacco, and the one thousand four hundred and eighty-three millions for drink? How do you like the comparison? Great lavishment for the world: great niggardliness for God.

My friends, let us set ourselves in battle array against

this God-defying extravagance. Buy not those things which are frivolous, when you may after awhile be in lack of the necessities. Buy not books you will never read, nor pictures you will never study. Put not a whole month's wages into one trinket.

#### KEEP YOUR CREDIT GOOD

by seldom or never asking for any. Pay. Starve not a whole year so as to be able to afford one Belshazzar carnival. Do not buy a coat of many colours, and then in six months be out at the elbows. Do not pay so much for a muffler for the neck, and be almost barefooted. Flourish not, as some I know of, in elegant hotels with drawing-room apartments, and then vanish in the night, not even leaving your compliments for the landlord.

In the great day of fire, we will have to give an account not only for how we made our money, but for how we spent it. On this cold day, when so many are suffering, and there is want before us, and want behind us, and want on either side of us, let us quit our waste. Men and women of God, I call upon you, to set a Christian example. Remember that soon you will have to leave your wardrobe and equipage. I do not want you to feel on that day like the dying actress, who ordered up her casket of jewels, and then with her pale, dying hand rolled them over, and said: "Alas! that I must give you up so soon." In that day, better have one treasure in heaven, just one, than to have had the bridal trousseau of a Queen Marie Louise, or to have sat with Caligula at a banquet which cost four hundred thousand dollars, or to have been carried out in a pageant with senators and princes for pall-bearers. They who consecrate to God their time, their talents, and their all, shall be held in everlasting remembrance, while the name of the wicked shall rot.



## THE AMERICAN PLAGUE-SPOT.

"Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men; and they counted the price of them and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver."—*Acts* xix. 19.

**P**AUL had been stirring up Ephesus with some lively sermons about the sins of that place. Among the more important results was the fact that the citizens brought out their bad books, and in a public place made a bonfire of them. I see the people coming out with their arms full of Ephesian literature, and tossing it into the flames. I hear an economist standing by and saying: "Stop this waste. Here are seven thousand five hundred dollars' worth of books—do you propose to burn them all up? If you don't want to read them yourselves, sell them, and let somebody else read them." "No," said the people, "if these books are not good for us, they are not good for anybody else, and we shall stand and watch until the last leaf has turned to ashes. They have done us a world of harm, and they shall never do others harm." Hear the flames crackle and roar!

Well, my friends, one of the wants of the cities of this country is a great bonfire of bad books and newspapers. We have enough fuel to make a blaze two hundred feet high. Many of the publishing houses would do well to throw into the blaze their entire stock of goods, and a great many of the newspaper establishments would do well to roll into the flames all their next issue of fifty or a hundred thousand copies. Bring forth the insufferable trash, and put it into the fire, and let it be known, in the presence of God, and angels, and men, that you are going to rid your homes of the overtopping and underlying curse of a profligate literature.

**THE PRINTING-PRESS IS THE MIGHTIEST AGENCY**  
on earth for good and for evil. The minister of the Gospel,

standing in a pulpit, has a responsible position; but I do not think it is as responsible as the position of an editor or a publisher. At what distant point of time, at what far out cycle of eternity, will cease the influence of a Henry J. Raymond, or a Horace Greeley, or a James Gordon Bennett? Take the simple statistic that our New York dailies now have a circulation of three hundred and fifty thousand per day, and add to it the fact that three of our weekly periodicals have an aggregate circulation of about one million, and then cipher, if you can, how far up, and how far down, and how far out, reach the influences of the American printing-press. Great God, what is to be the issue of all this? I believe the Lord intends the printing-press to be the chief means for the world's rescue and evangelization, and I think that the great last battle of the world will not be fought with swords and guns, but with types and presses—a purified and Gospel literature triumphing over, trampling down, and crushing out for ever that which is depraved. The only way to fight a bad book is by printing a good one. The only way to overcome unclean newspaper literature is by scattering abroad that which is healthful. May God speed the cylinders of an honest, intelligent, aggressive, Christian printing-press!

I have to tell you, this morning, that I believe that the greatest scourge that has ever come upon this nation has been that of unclean journalism. It has its victims in all occupations and departments. It has helped to fill insane asylums, and penitentiaries, and almshouses, and dens of shame. The bodies of this infection lie in the hospitals and in the graves, while their souls are being tossed over into a lost eternity,

**AN AVALANCHE OF HORROR AND DESPAIR!**

The London plague was nothing to it. That counted its

victims by thousands, but this modern pest has already shovelled its millions into the charnel-house of the morally dead. Anthony Comstock has done a glorious work against an infamous literature. Let the people all do him honour. They tried, the other night, to kill him in Newark. If they had slain him in his battle against a bad literature, it would have kindled a fire of indignation that all the waters of the Hudson and East River could not have extinguished. That man has already literally gathered up whole tons of iniquitous literature, and consigned it to the flames. But the longest rail-train that ever ran over the Erie or Hudson tracks was not long enough or large enough to carry the beastliness and the putrefaction which have been gathered up in bad books and newspapers of this land in the last twenty years.

Now, it is amid such circumstances that I put, this morning, a question of overmastering importance to you and your families. What books and newspapers shall we read? You see I group them together. A newspaper is only a book in a swifter and more portable shape, and the same rules which will apply to book reading will apply to newspaper reading. What shall we read? Shall our minds be the receptacle of everything that an author has a mind to write? Shall there be no distinction between the tree of life and the tree of death? Shall we stoop down and drink out of the trough which the wickedness of men has filled with pollution and shame? Shall we mire in impurity, and chase fantastic will-o'-the-wisps across the swamps, when we might walk in the blooming gardens of God? O no. For the sake of our present and everlasting welfare we must make an intelligent and Christian choice. Standing, as we do,

CHIN DEEP IN FICTITIOUS LITERATURE,

the first question that many of the young people are asking

me, is "Shall we read novels?" I reply: There are novels that are pure, good, Christian, elevating to the heart and ennobling to the life. But I have still further to say that I believe that ninety-nine out of the one hundred novels in this day are baleful and destructive to the last degree. A pure work of fiction is history and poetry combined. It is a history of things around us with the licenses and the assumed names of poetry. The world can never pay the debt which it owes to such fictitious writers as Hawthorne and McKenzie, and Landon and Hunt, and Arthur and Marion Harland, and others, whose names are familiar to all. The follies of high life were never better exposed than by Miss Edgeworth. The memories of the past were never more faithfully embalmed than in the writings of Walter Scott. Cooper's novels are healthfully redolent with the breath of the seaweed, and the air of the American forest. Charles Kingsley has smitten the morbidity of the world, and led a great many to appreciate the poetry of sound health, strong muscles, and fresh air. Thackeray did a grand work in caricaturing the pretenders to gentility and high blood. Dickens has built his own monument in his books, which are an everlasting plea for the poor, and the anathema of injustice. Now, I say, books like these, read at right times, and read in right proportion with other books, cannot help but be ennobling and purifying; but alas for the

#### LOATHSOME AND IMPURE LITERATURE

that has come upon this country in the shape of novels, like a freshet overflowing all the banks of decency and common sense. They are coming from some of the most celebrated publishing houses of the country. They are coming with recommendation of some of our religious newspapers. They lie on your centre table to curse your children, and blast with their infernal fires generations unborn. You find these

books in the desk of the school miss, in the trunk of the young man, in the steamboat cabin, on the table of the hotel reception-room. You see a light in your child's room late at night. You suddenly go in and say: "What are you doing?" "I am reading." "What are you reading?" "A book." You look at the book; it is a bad book. "Where did you get it?" "I borrowed it." Alas, there are always those abroad who would like to loan your son or daughter a bad book. Everywhere, everywhere an unclean literature. I charge upon it the destruction of ten thousand immortal souls, and I bid you this morning wake up to the magnitude of the theme. I shall take all the world's literature—good novels and bad, travels true and false, histories faithful and incorrect, legends beautiful and monstrous, all tracts, all chronicles, all epilogues, all family, city, State and national libraries—and pile them up in a pyramid of literature, and then I shall bring to bear upon it some grand, glorious, infallible, unmistakable Christian principles. God help me to speak with reference to my last account, and God help you to listen.

I charge you, in the first place, to stand aloof from all books that give

#### FALSE PICTURES OF HUMAN LIFE.

Life is neither a tragedy nor a farce. Men are not all either knaves or heroes. Women are neither angels nor furies. And yet, if you depended upon much of the literature of the day, you would get the idea that life, instead of being something earnest, something practical, is a fitful and fantastic and extravagant thing. How poorly prepared are that young man and woman for the duties of to-day who spent last night wading through brilliant passages descriptive of magnificent knavery and wickedness. The man will be looking all day long for his heroine in the

tin shop, by the forge, in the factory, in the counting-room, and he will not find her, and he will be dissatisfied. A man who gives himself up to the indiscriminate reading of novels will be nerveless, inane, and a nuisance. He will be fit neither for the store, nor the shop, nor the field. A woman who gives herself up to the indiscriminate reading of novels will be unfitted for the duties of wife, mother, sister, daughter. There she is, hair dishevelled, countenance vacant, cheeks pale, hands trembling, bursting into tears at midnight over the fate of some unfortunate lover; in the day-time, when she ought to be busy, staring by the half-hour at nothing; biting her finger nails into the quick. The carpet, that was plain before, will be plainer after having wandered through a romance all night long in tessellated halls of castles. And your industrious companion will be more unattractive than ever, now that you have walked in the romance through parks with plumed princesses, or lounged in the arbour with the polished desperado. O, these

#### CONFIRMED NOVEL READERS!

They are unfitted for this life, which is a tremendous discipline. They know not how to go through the furnaces of trial through which they must pass, and they are unfitted for a world where everything we gain we achieve by hard, long-continuing, and exhaustive work.

Again: abstain from all those books, which, while they have some good things about them, have also *an admixture of evil*. You have read books that had the two elements in them—the good and the bad. Which stuck to you? The bad! The heart of most people is like a sieve, which lets the small particles of gold fall through, but keeps the great cinders. Once in a while there is a mind like a loadstone, which, plunged amid steel and brass filings, gathers up the

steel and repels the brass. But it is generally just the opposite. If you attempt to plunge through a hedge of burrs to get one blackberry, you will get more burrs than blackberries. You cannot afford to read a bad book, however good you are. You say: "The influence is insignificant." I tell you that the scratch of a pin has sometimes produced the lock-jaw. Alas, if through curiosity, as many do, you pry into an evil book,

YOUR CURIOSITY IS AS DANGEROUS

as that of the man who should take a torch into a gun-powder mill merely to see whether it would really blow up or not. Only this last week, in a menagerie in New York, a man put his arm through the bars of a black leopard's cage. The animal's hide looked so sleek, and bright, and beautiful. He just stroked it once. The monster seized him, and he drew forth a hand torn, and mangled, and bleeding. O, touch not evil, even with the faintest stroke. Though it may be glossy and beautiful, touch it not, lest you pull forth your soul torn and bleeding under the clutch of the black leopard. "But," you say, "how can I find out whether a book is good or bad without reading it?" There is always

SOMETHING SUSPICIOUS ABOUT A BAD BOOK.

I never knew an exception—something suspicious in the index or the style of illustration. This venomous reptile almost always carries a warning rattle.

Again, I charge you to stand off from all those *books which corrupt the imagination and inflame the passions*. I do not refer now to that kind of a book which the villain has under his coat waiting for the school to get out, and then, looking both ways to see that there is no policeman around the block, offers the book to your son on his way home. I

do not speak of that kind of literature, but that which evades the law and comes out in polished style, and with acute plot sounds the tocsin that rouses up all the baser passions of the soul. To-day, under the nostrils of your city, there is a fetid, reeking, unwashed literature, enough to poison all the fountains of public virtue, and smite your sons and daughters as with the wing of a destroying angel, and it is time that the ministers of the Gospel blew the trumpet and rallied the forces of righteousness, all armed to the teeth, in this great battle against a depraved literature.

Again, abstain from those

#### BOOKS WHICH ARE APOLOGETIC OF CRIME.

It is a sad thing that some of the best and most beautiful book-binding, and some of the finest rhetoric, has been brought to make sin attractive. Vice is a horrible thing any how. It is born in shame, and it dies howling in the darkness. In this world it is scourged with a whip of scorpions, but afterwards the thunders of God's wrath pursue it across a boundless desert, beating it with ruin and woe. When you come to paint carnality, do not paint it as looking from behind embroidered curtains, or through lattice of royal seraglio, but as writhing in the agonies of a city hospital.

#### CURSED BE THE BOOKS

that try to make impurity decent, and crime attractive, and hypocrisy noble! Cursed be the books that swarm with libertines and desperadoes, who make the brain of the young people whirl with villainy! Ye authors who write them, ye publishers who print them, ye booksellers who distribute them, shall be cut to pieces, if not by an aroused community, then at last by the hail of Divine vengeance, which shall sweep to the lowest pit of perdition all ye murderers of souls. I tell you, though you may escape in this world, you



will be ground at last under the hoof of eternal calamities, and you will be chained to the rock, and you will have the vultures of despair clawing at your soul, and those whom you have destroyed will come around to torment you, and to pour hotter coals of fury upon your head, and rejoice eternally in the outcry of your pain and the howl of your damnation. "God shall wound the hairy scalp of him that goeth on in his trespasses."

A CONFIRMED NOVEL-READER PICTURED.

The clock strikes midnight. A fair form bends over a romance. The eyes flash fire. The breath is quick and irregular. Occasionally the colour dashes to the cheek, and then dies out. The hands tremble as though a guardian spirit were trying to shake the deadly book out of the grasp. Hot tears fall. She laughs with a shrill voice that drops dead at its own sound. The sweat on her brow is the spray dashed up from the river of death. The clock strikes "four," and the rosy dawn soon after begins to look through the lattice upon the pale form that looks like a detained spectre of the night. Soon in a madhouse she will mistake her ringlets for curling serpents, and thrust her white hand through the bars of the prison, and smite her head, rubbing it back as though to push the scalp from the skull, shrieking: "My brain! my brain!" O, stand off from that. Why will you go sounding your way amid the reefs and warning buoys, when there is such a vast ocean in which you may voyage, all sail set?

There is one other thing I shall say this morning before I leave you, whether you want to hear it or not. That is, that I consider the

LASCIVIOUS PICTORIAL LITERATURE OF THE DAY

as most tremendous for ruin. There is no one who can like good pictures better than I do. The quickest and most con-

densed way of impressing the public mind is by picture. What the painter does by his brush for a few favourites, the engraver does by his knife for the million. What the author accomplishes by fifty pages, the artist does by a flash. The best part of a painting that costs ten thousand dollars you may buy for ten cents. Fine paintings belong to the aristocracy of art. Engravings belong to the democracy of art. You do well to gather good pictures in your home. Spread them before your children, after the tea-hour is past, and the evening circle is gathered. Throw them on the invalid's couch. Strew them through the rail-train to cheer the traveller on his journey. Tack them on the wall of the nursery. Gather them in albums and portfolios. God speed the good pictures on their way with ministries of knowledge and mercy!

But what shall I say of the prostitution of this art to purposes of iniquity? These death-warrants of the soul are at every street corner. They smite the vision of the young man with pollution. Many a young man buying a copy has bought his eternal discomfiture. There may be enough poison in one bad picture to poison one soul, and that soul may poison ten, and ten fifty, and the fifty hundreds, and the hundreds thousands, until nothing but the measuring line of eternity can tell the height, and depth, and ghastliness, and horror of the great undoing. The work of death that the wicked author does in a whole book the bad engraver may do on a half side of a pictorial. Under the guise of pure mirth, the young man buys one of these sheets. He unrolls it before his comrades amid roars of laughter, but long after the paper is gone the result may perhaps be seen in the blasted imaginations of those who saw it.

#### THE QUEEN OF DEATH HOLDS A BANQUET

every night, and these periodicals are the printed invitation

to her guests. Alas ! that the fair brow of American art should be blotched with this plague-spot, and that philanthropists, bothering themselves about smaller evils, should lift up no united and vehement voice against this great calamity !

Young man ! Buy not this moral strychnine for your soul ! Pick not up this nest of coiled adders for your pocket ! Patronize no news-stand that keeps them ! Have your room bright with good engravings ; but for these outrageous pictorials have not one wall, not one bureau, not one pocket. A man is no better than the pictures he loves to look at. If your eyes are not pure, your heart cannot be. At a news-stand one can guess the character of a man by the kind of pictorial he purchases. When the devil fails to get a man to read a bad book, he sometimes succeeds in getting him to look at a bad picture. When Satan goes a-fishing he does not care whether it is a long line or a short line, if he only draws his victim in. Beware of lascivious pictorials, young man, in the name of Almighty God I charge you.

If I have this morning successfully laid down any principles by which you may judge in regard to books and newspapers, then I have done something of which I shall not be ashamed on the day which shall try every man's work, of what sort it is.

*Cherish good books and newspapers.* Beware of the bad ones. One column may save your soul ; one paragraph may ruin it. Benjamin Franklin said that the reading of "Cotton Mather's Essay on Doing Good" moulded his entire life. The assassin of Lord Russell declared that he was led into crime by reading one vicious romance. The consecrated John Angel James, than whom England never produced a better man, declared in his old days that he had never yet got over the evil effects of having for fifteen minutes once

read a bad book. But I need not go so far off. I could come nearer home, and tell you of something that occurred in my college days. I could tell you of a comrade who was great-hearted noble, and generous. He was studying for an honourable profession, but he had an infidel book in his trunk, and he said to me one day: "De Witt, would you like to read it?" I said: "Yes, I would." I took the book and read it only for a few minutes. I was really startled with what I saw there, and I handed the book back to him, and said: "You had better destroy that book." No, he kept it. He read it. He re-read it. After awhile he gave up religion as a myth.

#### HE GAVE UP GOD

as a nonentity. He gave up the Bible as a fable. He gave up the Church of Christ as a useless institution. He gave up good morals as being unnecessarily stringent. I have heard of him but twice in many years. The time before the last I heard of him, he was a confirmed inebriate. The last time I heard of him, he was coming out of an insane asylum—in body, mind, and soul an awful wreck. I believe that one infidel book killed him for two worlds.

Go home to-day, and look through your library, and then, having looked through your library, look on the stand where you keep your pictorials and newspapers, and apply the Christian principles I have laid down this morning. If there is anything in your home that cannot stand the test, do not give it away, for it might spoil an immortal soul; do not sell it, for the money you get would be the price of blood; but rather kindle a fire on your kitchen hearth, or in your back yard, and then drop the poison in it, and keep stirring the blaze until from preface to appendix there shall not be a single paragraph left, and the bonfire in Brooklyn shall be as consuming as that one in the streets of Ephesus.

## PEOPLE TO BE FEARED.

"Why hast thou then broken down her hedges, so that all they which pass by the way do pluck her? The boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it."—*Psalms lxxx. 12, 13.*

**B**Y this homely but expressive figure, the text sets forth the bad influences which in olden time broke in upon God's heritage, as with swine's foot trampling, and as with swine's snout uprooting the vineyards of prosperity. What was true then is true now. There have been enough trees of righteousness planted to overshadow the whole earth, had it not been for the axe-men who hewed them down. The temple of truth would long ago have been completed, had it not been for the iconoclasts who defaced the walls and battered down the pillars. The whole earth would have been an Eshcol of ripened clusters, had it not been that "the boar has wasted it, and the wild beast of the field devoured it."

I propose to point out to you those whom I consider to be *the uprooting and devouring classes of society*. First, *the public criminals*. You ought not to be surprised that these people make up a large portion in many communities. The vast majority of the criminals who take ship from Europe come into our own port. In 1869, of the forty-nine thousand people who were incarcerated in the prisons of the country, thirty-two thousand were of foreign birth. Many of them were the very desperadoes of society, oozing into the slums of our cities, waiting for an

### OPPORTUNITY TO RIOT AND STEAL

and debauch, joining the large gang of American thugs and cut-throats. There are in this cluster of cities—New York, Jersey City, and Brooklyn—four thousand people whose entire business in life is to commit crime. That is as much their business as jurisprudence, or medicine, or merchandise

is your business. To it they bring all their energies of body, mind, and soul, and they look upon the interregnums which they spend in prison as so much unfortunate loss of time, just as you look upon an attack of influenza or rheumatism which fastens you in the house for a few days. It is their lifetime business to pick pockets, and blow up safes, and shoplift, and ply the panel game, and they have as much pride of skill in their business as you have in yours when you upset the argument of an opposing counsel, or cure a gun-shot fracture which other surgeons have given up, or foresee a turn in the market, so that you buy goods just before they go up twenty per cent. It is their business to commit crime, and I do not suppose that once in a year the thought of the immorality strikes them. Added to these professional criminals, American and foreign, there is a large class of men who are more or less industrious in crime.

In one year the police in this cluster of cities arrested ten thousand people for theft, and ten thousand for assault and battery, and fifty thousand for intoxication. Drunkenness is responsible for much of the theft, since it confuses a man's ideas of property, and he gets his hands on things that do not belong to him. Rum is responsible for much of the assault and battery, inspiring men to sudden bravery, which they must demonstrate though it be on the face of the next gentleman.

#### SEVEN MILLIONS OF DOLLARS'

worth of property stolen in this cluster of cities in one year! You cannot, as good citizens, be independent of that fact. It will touch your pocket, since I have to give you the fact that these three cities pay seven million dollars' worth of taxes a year to arraign, try, and support the criminal population. You help to pay the board of every criminal, from the sneak-thief that snatches a spool of cotton, up to some

man who enacts a "Black Friday." More than that, it touches your heart in the moral depression of the community. You might as well think to stand in a closely confined room where there are fifty people and yet not breathe the vitiated air, as to stand in a community where there is such a great multitude of the depraved without somewhat being contaminated. What is the fire that burns your store down compared with the conflagration which consumes your morals? What is the theft of the gold and silver from your money safe compared with the theft of your children's virtue?

We are all ready to arraign criminals. We shout at the top of our voice: "Stop thief!" and when the police get on the track we come out, hatless and in our slippers, and assist in the arrest. We come around the bawling ruffian and hustle him off to justice, and when he gets in prison, what do we do for him? With great gusto we put on the handcuffs and the hobbles; but what preparation are we making for the day when the handcuffs and the hobbles come off? Society seems to say to these criminals: "Villain, go in their and rot," when it ought to say: "You are an offender against the law, but we mean to give you an opportunity to repent; we mean to help you. Here are Bibles, and tracts, and Christian influences. Christ died for you. Look, and live."

Vast improvements have been made by introducing industries into the prison; but we want something more than hammers and shoe-lasts to reclaim these people. Aye, we want more than sermons on the Sabbath-day. Society must impress these men with the fact that it does not enjoy their suffering, and that it is attempting to reform and elevate them. The majority of criminals suppose that society has a grudge against them, and they in turn have a grudge against society.

## THEY ARE HARDER IN HEART

and more infuriate when they come out of jail than when they went in. Many of the people who go to prison go again, and again, and again. Some years ago, of fifteen hundred prisoners who during the year had been in Sing Sing, four hundred had been there before. In a house of correction in the country, where during a certain reach of time there had been five thousand people, more than three thousand had been there before. So, in one case the prison, and in the other case the house of correction, left them just as bad as they were before. The secretary of one of the benevolent societies of New York saw a lad fifteen years of age who had spent three years of his life in prison, and he said to the lad: "What have they done for you to make you better?" "Well," replied the lad, "the first time I was brought up before the judge, he said: 'You ought to be ashamed of yourself.' And then I committed a crime again, and I was brought up before the same judge, and he said: 'You rascal!' And after awhile I committed some other crime, and I was brought before the same judge, and he said: 'You ought to be hanged.'" That is all they had done for him in the way of reformation and salvation. "O," you say, "these people are incorrigible." I suppose there are hundreds of persons this day lying in the prison bunks who would leap up at the prospect of reformation, if society would only allow them a way into decency and respectability. "O," you say, "I have no patience with these rogues." I ask you, in reply, how much better would you have been under the same circumstances? Suppose your mother had been a blasphemer and your father a sot, and you had started life with a body stuffed with evil proclivities, and you had spent much of your time in a cellar amid obscenities and cursing, and if at ten years of age you had been compelled to go out and steal, battered



and banged at night if you came in without any spoils, and suppose your early manhood and womanhood had been covered with rags and filth, and decent society had turned its back upon you, and left you to consort with vagabonds and wharf-rats—how much better would you have been? I have no sympathy with that executive clemency which would let crime run loose, or which would sit in the gallery of a court-room weeping because some hard-hearted wretch is brought to justice; but I do say that the safety and life of the community demand more potential influences in behalf of public offenders.

Within five minutes' walk of where I now stand, there is a prison, enough to bring down

#### THE WRATH OF ALMIGHTY GOD

on this city of Brooklyn. It is the Raymond-street jail. It would not be strange if the jail fever should start in that horrible hole, like that which raged in England during the session of the Black Assize, when three hundred perished—judges, jurors, constables, and lawyers. Alas that our fair city should have such a pest-house. I understand the sheriff and the jail-keeper do all they can, under the circumstances, for the comfort of these people; but five and six people are put into a place where there ought to be but one or two. The air is like that of the Black Hole of Calcutta. As the air swept through the wicket, it almost knocked me down. No sunlight. Young men who had committed their first crime crowded in among old offenders. I saw there one woman, with a child almost blind, who had been arrested for the crime of poverty, who was waiting until the slow law could take her to the almshouse, where she rightfully belonged; but she was thrust in there with her child amid the most abandoned wretches of the town. Many of the offenders in that prison sleeping on the floor, with nothing but a vermin-covered

blanket over them. Those people crowded and wan, and wasted, and half-suffocated, and infuriated. I said to the men: How do you stand it here?" "God knows," said one man "we have to stand it." O, they will pay you when they get out. Where they burned down one house, they will burn three. They will strike deeper the assassin's knife. They are this minute plotting worse burglaries. Raymond-street gaol is the best place I know of to manufacture foot-pads, vagabonds, and cut-throats. Yale College is not so well calculated to make scholars, nor Harvard so well calculated to make scientists, nor Princeton so well calculated to make theologians, as Raymond-street gaol is calculated to make criminals. All that those men do not know of crime after they have been in that dungeon for some time, Satanic machination cannot teach them. Every hour that gaol stands, it challenges the Lord Almighty to smite this city. I call upon the people to rise in their wrath and demand a reformation. I call upon judges of our courts to expose that infamy. I call upon the Legislature of the State of New York, now in session, to examine and appease that outrage on God and human society. I demand, in behalf of those incarcerated prisoners, fresh air and clear sunlight, and, in the name of Him who had not where to lay His head, a couch to rest on at night. In the insufferable stench and sickening surroundings of that Raymond-street jail there is nothing but disease for the body, idiocy for the mind, and death for the soul. Stifled air, and darkness, and vermin never turned a thief into an honest man.

We want men like John Howard and Sir William Blackstone, and women like Elizabeth Fry, to do for the prisons of the United States what those people did in other days for the prisons of England. I thank God for what Isaac T. Hopper, and Doctor Wines, and Mr. Harris,

and scores of others have done in the way of prison reform; but

WE WANT SOMETHING MORE RADICAL

before upon this city will come the blessing of Him who said: "I was in prison, and ye came unto me."

Again: in this class of uprooting and devouring population are *untrustworthy officials*. "Woe unto thee, O land, when thy kings are children and thy princes drink in the morning." It is a great calamity to a city when bad men get into public authority. Why was it that in New York there was such unparalleled crime between 1866 and 1871? It was because the judges of police in that city, for the most part, were as corrupt as the vagabonds that came before them for trial. Those were the days of high carnival for election frauds, assassination and forgery. We had the "Whiskey Ring," and the "Tammany Ring," and the "Erie Ring." There was one man during those years that got one hundred and twenty-eight thousand dollars in one year for serving the public. In a few years' it was estimated that there were fifty millions of public treasure squandered. In those times the criminal had only to wink to the judge, or his lawyer would wink for him, and the question was decided for the defendant. Of the eight thousand people arrested in that city in one year, only three thousand were punished. These little matters were "fixed up," while the interests of society were "fixed down." You know as well as I that a criminal who escapes only opens the door for other criminalities. When the two pickpockets snatched the diamond pin from the Brooklyn gentleman in a Broadway stage, and the villains were arrested, and the trial was set down for the General Sessions, and then the trial never came, and never anything more was heard of the case, the public officials were only bidding higher for more crime. It is no

compliment to public authority when we have in all the cities of the country, walking abroad, men and women notorious for criminality, unwhipped of justice. They are pointed out to you in the street day by day. There you find what are called the "fences,"—the men who stand between the thief and the honest man, sheltering the thief, and at great price handing over the goods to the owner to whom they belong. There you will find those who are called the "skimmers," the men who hover around Wall-street, with great sleight of hand in bonds and stocks. There you find

#### THE FUNERAL THIEVES,

the people who go and sit down and mourn with families and pick their pockets. And there you find the "confidence men," who borrow money of you because they have a dead child in the house and want to bury it, when they never had a house nor a family; or they want to go to England and get a large property there, and they want you to pay their way, and they will send the money back by the very next mail. There are the "harbour thieves," the "shoplifters," the "pickpockets," famous all over the cities. Hundreds of them with their faces in the "Rogues' Gallery," yet doing nothing for the last five or ten years but defraud society and escape justice. When these people go unarrested and unpunished, it is putting a high premium upon vice, and saying to the young criminals of this country, "What a safe thing it is to be a great criminal." Let the law swoop upon them. Let it be known in this country that crime will have no quarter, that the detectives are after it, that the police club is being brandished, that the iron door of the prison is being opened, that the judge is ready to call on the case. Too great leniency to criminals is too great severity to society. When the President pardoned the wholesale dealer in obscene books, he hindered the crusade against licentiousness;

but when Governor Dix refused to let go Forster the assassin, who was condemned to the gallows, he grandly vindicated the laws of God and the dignity of the State of New York.

Again : among the uprooting and devouring classes in our midst, are *the idle*. Of course, I do not refer to people who are getting old, or to the sick, or to those who cannot get work ; but I tell you to look out for those athletic men and women who will not work. When the French nobleman was asked why he kept busy when he had so large a property, he said : " I keep on engraving so I may not hang myself." I do not care who the man is, you cannot afford to be idle. It is from the idle classes that the criminal classes are made up. Character like water, gets putrid if it stands still too long. Who can wonder that in this world, where there is so much to do, and all the hosts of earth and heaven and hell are plunging into the conflict, and angels are flying, and God is at work, and the universe is a-quake with the marching and countermarching, that God lets His indignation fall upon a man who chooses idleness ? I have watched these do-nothings who spend their time stroking their beard, and re-touching their *toilette*, and criticising industrious people, and pass their days and nights in bar-rooms and club-houses, lounging and smoking and chewing and card-playing. They are not only useless, but they are dangerous. How hard it is for them to while away the hours.

ALAS ! FOR THEM,

if they do not know how to while away an hour, what will they do when they have all eternity on their hands ? These men for awhile smoke the best cigars, and wear the best broadcloth, and move in the highest spheres ; but I have noticed that very soon they come down to the prison, the almshouse, or stop at the gallows.

The police stations of this cluster of cities furnish annually two hundred thousand lodgings. For the most part, these two hundred thousand lodgings are furnished to able-bodied men and women—people as able to work as you and I are. When they are received no longer at one police station, because they are “repeaters,” they go to some other station, and so they keep moving around. They get their food at house doors, stealing what they can lay their hands on in the front basement while the servant is spreading the bread in the back basement. They will not work. Time and again, in the country districts, they have wanted hundreds and thousands of labourers. These men will not go. They do not want to work. I have tried them. I have set them to sawing wood in my cellar, to see whether they wanted to work. I offered to pay them well for it. I have heard the saw going for about three minutes, and then I went down, and lo, the wood, but no saw! They are the pest of society, and they stand in the way of the Lord's poor, who ought to be helped, and must be helped, and will be helped. While there are thousands of industrious men who cannot get any work, these men who do not want any work come in and make that plea. I am in favour of the restoration of the old-fashioned whipping-post for just this one class of men who will not work; sleeping at night at public expense in the station house; during the day, getting their food at your door-step. Imprisonment does not scare them. They would like it. Blackwell's Island or Sing Sing would be a comfortable home for them. They would have no objection to the almshouse, for they like thin soup, if they cannot get mock-turtle. I propose this for them: on one side of them put some healthy work; on the other side put a raw hide, and let them take their choice. I like for that class of people the scant bill of fare that Paul wrote out for the Thessalonian loafers: “If any

work not, neither should he eat." By what law of God or man is it right that you and I should toil day in and day out, until our hands are blistered, and our arms ache, and our brain gets numb, and then be called upon to support what in the United States are about

#### TWO MILLION LOAFERS?

They are a very dangerous class. Let the public authorities keep their eyes on them.

Again: among the uprooting classes I place *the oppressed poor*. Poverty to a certain extent is chastening; but after that, when it drives a man to the wall, and he hears his children cry in vain for bread, it sometimes makes him desperate. I think that there are thousands of honest men lacerated into vagabondism. There are men crushed under burdens for which they are not half-paid. While there is no excuse for criminality, even in oppression, I state it as a simple fact that much of the scoundrelism of the community is consequent upon ill-treatment. There are many men and women battered and bruised, and stung until the hour of despair has come, and they stand with the ferocity of a wild beast which, pursued until it can run no longer, turns round, foaming and bleeding, to fight the hounds.

There is a vast underground New York and Brooklyn life that is appalling and shameful. It wallows and steams with putrefaction. You go down the stairs, which are wet and decayed with filth, and at the bottom you find the poor victims on the floor, cold, sick, three-fourths dead, slinking into a still darker corner under the gleam of the lantern of the police. There has not been a breath of fresh air in that room for five years, literally. The broken sewer empties its contents upon them, and they lie at night in the swimming filth. There they are, men, women, and children;

blacks, whites; Mary Magdalen without her repentance, Lazarus without his God! These are "the dives" into which the pick-pockets and the thieves go, as well as a great many who would like a different life but cannot get it. These places are the sores of the city, which bleed perpetual corruption. They are the underlying volcano that threatens us with a Caraccas earthquake. It rolls, and roars, and surges, and heaves, and rocks, and blasphemes, and dies. And there are only two outlets for it: the police court and the Potter's Field. In other words, they must either go to prison or to hell. O, you never saw it, you say.

## YOU NEVER WILL SEE IT

until on the day when these staggering wretches shall come up in the light of the judgment throne, and while all hearts are being revealed, God will ask you what you did to help them.

There is another layer of poverty and destitution, not so squalid, but almost as helpless. You hear the incessant wailing for bread, and clothes, and fire. Their eyes are sunken. Their cheek-bones stand out. Their hands are damp with slow consumption. Their flesh is puffed up with dropsies. Their breath is like that of the charnel-house. They hear the roar of the wheels of fashion over head, and the gay laughter of men and maidens, and wonder why God gave to others so much and to them so little. Some of them thrust into an infidelity like that of the poor German girl who, when told in the midst of her wretchedness that God was good, said: "No, no good God. Just look at me. No good God."

In this cluster of cities, whose cry of want I this day interpret, there are said to be, as far as I can figure it up from the reports, about two hundred and ninety thousand honest poor who are dependent upon individual, city, and state



charities. If all their voices could come up at once, it would be a groan that would shake the foundations of the city, and bring all earth and heaven to the rescue. But, for the most part, it suffers unexpressed. It sits in silence, gnashing its teeth, and sucking the blood of its own arteries, waiting for the judgment day. O, I should not wonder if on that day it would be found out that some of us had some things that belonged to them; some extra garment which might have made them comfortable in these cold days; some bread thrust into the ash-barrel that might have appeased their hunger for a little while; some wasted candle or gas-jet that might have kindled up their darkness; some fresco on the ceiling that would have given them a roof; some jewel which, brought to that orphan girl in time, might have kept her from being crowded off the precipices of an unclean life; some New Testament that would have told them of Him who "came to seek and save that which was lost." O, this wave of vagrancy and hunger, and nakedness that dashes against our front door-step; I wonder if you hear it and see it as much as I hear it and see it. This last week

I HAVE BEEN ALMOST FRENZIED

with the perpetual cry for help from all classes and from all nations, knocking, knocking, ringing, ringing, until I dare not have more than one decent pair of shoes, nor more than one decent coat, nor more than one decent hat, lest in the last day it be found that I have something that belongs to them, and Christ shall turn to me and say: "Inasmuch as ye did it *not* to these, ye did it *not* to Me." If the roofs of all the houses of destitution could be lifted so we could look down into them just as God looks, whose nerves would be strong enough to stand it? And yet there they are. The forty-five thousand sewing-women in these three cities, some of them in hunger and cold,

working night after night, until sometimes the blood spurts from nostril and lip. How well their grief was voiced by that despairing woman who stood by her invalid husband and invalid child, and said to the city missionary: "I am down-hearted. Everything's against us; and then there are other things." "What other things?" said the city missionary. "O," she replied, "my sin." "What do you mean by that?" "Well," she said, "I never hear or see anything good. It's work from Monday morning to Saturday night, and then when Sunday comes I can't go out, and I walk the floor, and it makes me tremble to think that I have got to meet God. O, sir, it's so hard for us. We have to work so, and then we have so much trouble, and then we are getting along so poorly; and see this wee little thing growing weaker and weaker; and then to think we are getting no nearer to God, but floating away from Him. O, sir, I do wish I was ready to die."

I should not wonder if they had a good deal better time than we in the future, to make up for the fact that they had such a bad time here. It would be just like Jesus to say: "Come up and take the highest seats. You suffered with Me on earth; now be glorified with Me in heaven." O Thou weeping One of Bethany! O Thou dying One of the cross! Have mercy on the starving, freezing, homeless poor of these great cities!

I have preached this sermon for four or five practical reasons: Because I want you to know who are the up-rooting classes of society. Because I want you to

**BE MORE DISCRIMINATING IN YOUR CHARITIES.**

Because I want your hearts open with generosity, and your hands open with charity. Because I want you to be made the sworn friends of all city evangelization, and all newsboys' lodging houses, and all Howard missions, and Children's Aid

Societies. Aye, I have preached it because I want you this week to send to the Dorcas Society all the cast-off clothing, that, under the skilful manipulation of our wives and mothers and sisters and daughters, these garments may be fitted on the cold, bare feet, and on the shivering limbs of the destitute. I should not wonder if that hat that you give should come back a jewelled coronet, or if that garment that you this week hand out from your wardrobe should mysteriously be whitened, and somehow wrought into the Saviour's own robe, so in the last day He would run His hand over it, and say: "I was naked and ye clothed Me." That would be putting your garments to glorious uses.

But more than that, I have preached the sermon because I thought in the contrast you would see how very kindly God had dealt with you, and I thought that thousands of you would go to-day to your comfortable homes, and sit at your well-filled tables. and at the warm registers, and look at the round faces of your children, and that then you would burst into tears at the review of God's goodness to you, and that you would go to your room this afternoon and lock the door, and kneel down, and say: "O Lord, I have been an ingrate; make me Thy child. O Lord, there are so many hungry and unclad and unsheltered to-day, I thank Thee that all my life Thou hast taken such good care of me. O Lord, there are so many sick and crippled children to-day, I thank Thee mine are well, some of them on earth, some of them in heaven. Thy goodness, O Lord, breaks me down. Take me once, and for ever. Sprinkled as I was many years ago at the altar, while my mother held me, now I consecrate my soul to Thee in a holier baptism of repenting tears.

" 'For sinners, Lord, Thou cam'st to bleed,  
And I'm a sinner vile indeed ;  
Lord, I believe Thy grace is free,  
O magnify that grace in me.' "

## THE RED CORD IN THE WINDOW.

"And she bound the scarlet line in the window."—*Joshua* ii. 21.

**I**F you have any idea that I have chosen this text because it is odd, you do not know me nor the errand on which I come. Eternity is too near, and life too short, for men to take texts merely because they are peculiar. I take this because it is full of the old Gospel.

There is a very sick and sad house in the city of Jericho. What is the matter? Is it poverty? No. Worse than that. Is it leprosy? No. Worse than that. Is it death? No. Worse than that. A daughter has forsaken her home. By what infernal plot she was induced to leave I know not; but they look in vain for her return. Sometimes they hear a footstep very much like hers, and they start up, and say: "She comes!" but only to sink back again into disappointment. Alas! Alas! The father sits by the hour, with his face in his hands, saying not one word. The mother's hair is becoming grey too fast, and she begins to stoop so that those who saw her only a little while ago in the street know her not now as she passes. The brothers clench their fists, swearing vengeance against the despoiler of their home. Alas! will the poor soul never come back? There is a long, deep shadow over all the household. Added to this there is an invading army six miles away, just over the river, coming on to destroy the city; and what with the loss of their child, and the coming on of that destructive army, I think the old people wished that they could die. That is the first scene in this drama of the Bible.

In a house on the wall of the city is that daughter. That is her home now. Two spies have come from the invading army to look around through Jericho, and see how best it may be taken. Yonder is the lost child, in that dwelling on the wall of the city. The police hear of it, and soon there

is the shuffling of feet all around about the door, and the city government demands the surrender of those two spies. First, Rahab—for that was the name of the lost child—first, Rahab secretes the two spies, and gets their pursuers off the track; but after awhile she says to them: “I will make a bargain with you. I will save your life if you will save my life, and the life of my father and my mother, and my brothers, and my sisters, when the victorious army comes upon the city.” O, she had not forgotten her home yet, you see. The wanderer never forgets home. Her heart breaks now as she thinks of how she has maltreated her parents, and she wishes she were back with them again, and she wishes she could get away from her sinful enthrallment; and sometimes she looks up in the face of the midnight,

#### BURSTING INTO AGONIZING TEARS.

No sooner have these two spies promised to save her life, and the life of her father, and mother, and brothers, and sisters, than Rahab takes a scarlet cord and ties it around the body of one of the spies, brings him to the window, and as he clambers out—nervous lest she have not strength to hold him—with muscular arms such as woman seldom has, she lets him down, hand over hand, in safety to the ground. Not being exhausted, she ties the cord around the other spy, brings him to the window, and just as successfully lets him down to the ground. No sooner have these men untied the scarlet cord from their bodies than they look up, and they say: “You had better get all your friends in this house—your father, your mother, your brothers, and your sister; you had better get them in this house. And then, after you have them here, take this red cord which you have put around our bodies, and tie it across the window; and when our victorious army comes up, and see that scarlet thread in the window, they will spare this

house and all who are in it. Shall it be so?" cried the spies. "Aye, aye," said Rahab, from the window, "it shall be so." That is the second scene in this Bible drama.

There is a knock at the door of the old man. He looks up and says: "Come in," and lo! there is Rahab, the lost child; but she has no time to talk. They gather in excitement around her, and she says to them: "Get ready quickly, and go with me to my house. The army is coming! The trumpet! Make haste! Fly! The enemy!" That is the third scene in this Bible drama.

The hosts of Israel are all around about the doomed city of Jericho. Crash! goes the great metropolis, heaps on heaps. The air suffocating with the dust, and horrible with the screams of a dying city. All the houses flat down. All the people dead. Ah no, no. On a crag of the wall—the only piece of the wall left standing—there is a house which we must enter. There is a family there that have been spared. Who are they? Let us go in and see. Rahab, her father, her mother, her brothers, her sisters all safe, and the only house left standing in all the city. What saved them? Was the house more firmly built? O no; it was built in the most perilous place—on the wall; and the wall was the first thing that fell. Was it because her character was any better than any of the other population of the city? O no. Why then was she spared, and all her household? Can you tell me why? O, it was the scarlet line in the window. That is the fourth scene in this Bible drama.

When the destroying angel went through Egypt it was the blood of the lamb on the door-posts that saved the Israelites; and now that vengeance has come upon Jericho it is the same colour that assures the safety of Rahab and all her household. My friends,

THERE ARE FOES COMING UPON US, more deadly and more tremendous, to overthrow our immortal interests. They will trample us down and crush us out for ever, unless there be some skilful mode of rescue open. The police of death already begin to clamour for our surrender; but, blessed be God, there is a way out. It is through the window, and by a rope so saturated with the blood of the cross that it is as red as that with which the spies were lowered; and if once our souls shall be delivered, then, the scarlet cord stretched across the window of our escape, we may defy all bombardment, earthly and satanic.

In the first place, carrying out the idea of my text, we must stretch this scarlet cord *across the window of our rescue*. There comes a time when a man is surrounded. What is that in the front door of his soul? It is the threatenings of the future. What is that in the back door of the soul? It is the sins of the past. He cannot get out of either of those door-ways. If he attempts it he will be cut to pieces. What shall he do? Escape through the window of God's mercy. That sunshine has been pouring in for many a day. God's inviting mercy. God's pardoning mercy. God's all-conquering mercy. God's everlasting mercy. But you say, the window is so high. Ah, there is a rope, the very one with which the cross and its victim were lifted. That was strong enough to hold Christ, and it is strong enough to hold you. Bear all your weight upon it, all your hopes for this life, all your hopes for the life that is to come. Escape now through the window. "But," you say, "that cord is too small to save me; that salvation will never do at all for such a sinner as I have been." I suppose that the rope with which Rahab let the two spies to the ground was not thick enough; but they took that or nothing. And, my dear brother, that is your alternative. There is only one scarlet line that can

save you. There have been hundreds and thousands who have been borne away in safety by that scarlet line, and it will bear you away in safety. Do you notice what a very narrow escape those spies had? I suppose they came with flustered cheek and with excited heart. They had a *very* narrow escape. They went in the broad door of sin; but how did they come out? They came out of the window. They went up by the stairs of stone; they came down on a slender thread. And so, my friends, we go easily and unabashedly into sin, and all the doors are open; but if we get out at all it will be by being let down over precipices, wriggling and helpless, the strong grip above keeping us from being dashed on the rocks beneath. It is easy to get into sin, young man. It is not so easy to get out of it.

A young man, to-night, goes to the marble counter of the bar-room of the Fifth Avenue Hotel. He asks for a brandy smash—called so, I suppose, because it smashes the man that takes it. There is no intoxication in it. As the young man receives it he does not seem to be at all excited. It does not give any glossiness to the eye. He walks home in beautiful apparel, and all his prospects are brilliant. That drink is not going to destroy him,

#### BUT IT IS THE FIRST STEP

on a bad road. Years have passed on, and I see that young man after he has gone the whole length of dissipation. It is midnight, and he is in a hotel—perhaps the very one where he took the first drink. He is in the fourth story, and the delirium is on him. He rises from the bed and comes to the window, and it is easily lifted; so he lifts it. Then he pushes back the blinds and puts his foot on the window sill. Then he gives one spring, and the watchman finds his disfigured body, unrecognizable, on the pavement. O, if he had only waited a little—if he had come down on the scarlet ladder



that Jesus holds from the wall for him, and for you, and for me; but no, he made one jump, and was gone. A minister of Christ was not long ago dismissed from his diocese for intoxication, and in a public meeting at the West he gave this account of his sorrow. He said: "I had a beautiful home once: but strong drink shattered it. I had beautiful children; but this fiend of rum took their dimpled hands in his and led them to the grave. I had a wife—to know her was to love her; but she sits in wretchedness to-night while I wander over the earth. I had a mother, and the pride of her life was me; but the thunderbolt struck her. I now have scarcely a friend in the world. Taste of the bitter cup I have tasted, and then answer me as to whether I have any hatred for the agency of my ruin. Hate it! I hate the whole damning traffic. I would to God to-night that every distillery was in flames, for then in the glowing sky I would write in the smoke of the ruin: 'Woe to him that putteth the bottle to his neighbour's lips!'" That minister of the Gospel went in through the broad door of temptation; he came out of the window. And when I see the temptations that are about us, and when I know the proclivity to sin in every man's heart, I see that if any of us escape it will be a very narrow escape. O, if we have, my friends, got off from our sin, let us tie the scarlet thread by which we have been saved across the window. Let us do it in praise of Him whose blood dyed it that colour. Let it be in announcement of the fact that we shall no more be fatally assaulted. "There is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." Then let all the forces of this world come up in cavalry charge, and let spirits of darkness come on an infernal storming party attempting to take our soul, this rope twisted from these words, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin," will hurl them back defeated for ever.

Still further : we must take this red cord of the text and stretch it *across the window of our households*. When the Israelitish army came up against Jericho, they said : "What is that in the window ?" Some one said :

"THAT IS A SCARLET LINE."

"O," said some one else, "that must be the house that was to be spared. Don't touch it." That line was thick enough, and long enough, and conspicuous enough to save Rahab, her father, her mother, her brothers, and her sisters—the entire family. Have our households as good protection ? You have bolts on the front door and on the back, and fastenings to the window, and perhaps burglar alarms, and perhaps an especial watchman blowing his whistle at midnight before your dwelling ; but all that cannot protect your household. Is there on our houses the sign of a Saviour's sacrifice and mercy ? Is there a scarlet line in the window ? Have your children been consecrated to Christ ? Have you been washed in the blood of the atonement ? In what room do you have family prayers ? Show me where it is you are accustomed to kneel. The sky is black with the coming deluge. Is your family inside or outside of the ark ? Is it a sad thing for a man to reject Christ ; but to lie down in the night of sin, across the path to heaven, so that his family come up and trip over him into an infinity of horrors—that is the longest, the deepest, the mightiest. It is a sad thing for a mother to reject Christ ; but to gather her family around her, and then take them by the hand and lead them out into paths of worldliness, away from God and heaven—O, it will take all the dirges of earth and hell to weep out that agony. I suppose there are in this church to-night families represented where there has not been an audible prayer offered for ten years. There may be geranium and cactus in the window, and upholstery hovering

over it, and childish faces looking out of it; but there is no scarlet thread stretched across it. Although that house may seem to be on the finest street in all the city, it is really on the edge of a marsh across which sweep most poisonous malarias, and it has a sandy foundation, and its splendour will come down, and great will be the fall of it. A home without God! A prayerless father! An undevout mother! Awful! awful! Is that you? Will you keep on, my brother, on the wrong road, and take your loved ones with you? May God arrest you before you complete the ruin of those whom you ought to save. You see I talk plainly to you, just as I would have you talk plainly to me. Time is so short that we cannot waste any of it on apologies, or indirections, or circumlocutions. You owe to your children, O father, O mother, more than food, more than clothing, more than shelter—you owe them the example of a prayerful, consecrated, pronounced, out-and-out Christian life. You cannot afford to keep it away from them.

Now, as I stand here, you do not see any hands outstretched towards me, and yet there are hands on my brow and hands on both my shoulders. They are hands of parental benediction. It is quite a good many years ago now since we folded those hands as they began the last sleep on the banks of the Raritan, in the village cemetery; but those hands are stretched out towards me to-night, and they are just as warm and they are just as gentle as when I sat at their knee at five years of age. And I shall never shake off those hands. I do not want to. They have helped me so much a thousand times already, and I do not expect to have a trouble or a trial between this and my grave where those hands will not help me.

IT WAS NOT A VERY SPLENDID HOME,

as the world calls it; but we had a family Bible there, well



worn by tender perusal; and there was a family altar there, where we knelt morning and night; and there was a holy Sabbath there; and stretched in a straight line or hung in loops or festoons, there was a scarlet line in the window. O the tender, precious, blessed memory of a Christian home! Is that the impression you are making upon your children? When you are dead—and it will not be long before you are—when you are dead, will your child say: “If there ever was a good Christian father, mine was one. If there ever was a good Christian mother, mine was one?” Will they say that after you are dead? Standing some Sabbath night in church preaching the glorious Gospel, as I am trying to do, will they tell the people in that day how there are hands of benediction on their brow and hands of parental benediction on both their shoulders?

Still further: we want this scarlet line of the text drawn *across the window of our prospects*. I see Rahab, and her father, and her mother, and her brothers, and sisters looking out over Jericho, the city of palm-trees, and across the river, and over at the army invading, and then up to the mountains and the sky. Mind you, this house was on the wall, and I suppose the prospect from the window must have been very wide. Besides that, I do not think that the scarlet line at all interfered with the view of the landscape. The assurance it gave of safety must have added to the beauty of the country. To-night, my friends, we stand or sit in the window of earthly prospects, and we look off towards the hills of heaven and the landscape of eternal beauty. God has opened the window for us, and we look out; but how if we do not get there? If we never get there, better never to have had even this faint glimpse of it. We now only get a dim outline of the inhabitants. We now only here and there catch a note of the exquisite harmony.

But blessed be God for this scarlet line in the window. That tells me that the blood of Christ bought that home for my soul, and I shall go there when my work is done here. And as I put my hand on that scarlet line, everything in the future brightens. My eyesight gets better, and the robes of the victors are more lustrous, and our loved ones who went away some time ago—they do not stand any more with their backs to us, but their faces are this way and their voice drops through this Sabbath air, saying with all tenderness and sweetness: "Come! Come! Come!" And the child that you think of only as buried—why, there she is, and it is May-day in heaven; and they gather the amaranth, and they pluck the lilies, and they twist them into a garland for her brow, and she is one of the May queens of heaven. O do you think they could see our waving to-night? It is quite a pleasant night outdoors, pretty clear, not many clouds in the sky, quite starlight.

I WONDER IF THEY CAN SEE US

from that good land? I think they can. If from this window of earthly prospects we can almost see them, then from their towers of light I think they can fully see us. And so I wave them the glory, and I wave them the joy, and I say: "Have you got through with all your troubles?" and their voices answer: "God hath wiped away all tears from our eyes." I say, "is it as grand up there as you thought it would be?" and the voices answer: "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for those that love Him." I say: "Do you have any more struggle for bread?" and they answer: "We hunger no more, we thirst no more." And I say: "Have you been out to the cemetery of the golden city?" and they answer: "There is no death here." and I look out through the night heavens, and I say:

"Where do you get your light from, and what do you burn in the temple?" and they answer: "There is no night here, and we have no need of candle or of star." And I say: "What book do you sing out of?" and they answer: "The Hallelujah Chorus." And I say: "In the splendour and magnificence of the city, don't you ever get lost?" and they answer: "The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne leadeth us to living fountains of water." O how near it seems to-night. Their wings—do you not feel them? Their harps—do you not hear them? And all that through the window of our earthly prospects, across which stretcheth the scarlet line.

Be that my choice colour for ever. Is it too glaring for you? Do you like the blue because it reminds you of the sky, or the green because it makes you think of the foliage, or the black because it has in it the shadows of the night? I take the scarlet because it shall make me think of the price that was paid for my soul. O the blood! the blood! the blood of the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Through it we escape sin. Through it we reach heaven. Will you let it atone for you? Believe in it and you will live. Refuse it and you die. Will you accept it, or will you pull over on you the eternal calamity of rejecting it?

I see where you are. You are at the cross roads to-night. The next step decides everything. Pause before you take it; but do not pause too long lest the wind of God's justice slam shut the door that has been standing open so long. I hear the thunder of God's artillery. I hear the blast of the trumpet that wakes the dead. Look out! Look out! For in that day, and in our closing moment on earth, better than any other defence or barricade, however high or broad or stupendous, will be one little, thin, scarlet thread in the window.

UNIVERSALISM *VERSUS* THE BIBLE.

"Woe to those who sew pillows to the armholes."—*Ezek.* xiii. 18.

**T**HE Chaldeans were to capture Jerusalem. God said so. False prophetesses denied it, and to quell the anxieties of the people employed a significant symbol by sewing little pillows under the arms, as much as to say: "Whenever you feel these soft pads at the armsleeve, bethink yourselves all shall be easy and well." But alas for the delusion! Notwithstanding all the smoothness of the prophecy, Jerusalem went down in darkness, and fire, and blood.

It is not more certain that you are here this morning, not more certain that that is a window, not more certain that that is a ceiling, not more certain that that is a chair, not more certain that that is a carpet, than it is certain that God has declared destruction to the finally impenitent. Universalism comes out and tries to quell this fear, and wants to sew two pillows under my armsleeves, and wants to sew two pillows under your armsleeves. It shall not do it. God helping me, I shall, this morning, put before my own soul and yours the absorbing facts, and I shall try to snatch their pillow of false peace from under the arms of my auditors, and show you what the perils are, that you may one and all escape them. Suppose there were some real danger ahead, and a man comes into your house, and says: "There is no peril; be at peace!" and another neighbour comes in, and says: "There is a peril, and I know how you can escape it, and I come to tell you;" which is the best friend and the best neighbour? Why, the latter, of course, and I want to act his part to-day.

There are two branches of Universalism: one made of the Restorationists, who, while they admit there may be some punishment in the future world, say it will come to an end, and the soul, through a process of reformation, will come up

at last into light, and joy, and peace, and victory ; but the vast majority of the Universalists that I have met in the world believe that there is no future punishment at all, and that, whatever may have been our character in this world, the moment we step across the line into the future world we are completely happy ! People need not tell me that is not Universalism. I take it not from books ; I take it from my own observation and my frequent converse with men who have adopted such theories. However, all Universalists agree in saying that the human race will all eventually be happy.

I shall, this morning, show you that Universalism, under any shape, is unscriptural, unreasonable,

#### DESTRUCTIVE OF GOOD MORALS,

withering to all earnestness in soul-saving, and the means of eternal catastrophe to a great many. You say: "Do you think to impose upon us, this morning, by bringing out that old obsolete book, the Bible—a book fit only for grandmothers in their second childhood—and propose to prove anything by that?" I respond by saying it is most reasonable to expect that God would give this race some kind of a revelation. Well, if God has given a revelation, which is it? I can now think of only five books that pretend to be Divine revelations: the Koran, the Shaster, the Zend-Avesta, the Confucius writings, and the Bible. Which of those five books do you prefer to believe a Divine revelation? The vast majority of the people in the audience say: "Give us the Bible. We take that." Will you stand by it through all this argument of the morning? "Yes," you say. So will I stand by it. Having made up our minds that this is the Binding Statute in the case, now I solemnly empanel all this audience as a jury for the trial, and I shall proceed to open the cause and to call the witnesses.



To prove that there is such a thing as future punishment, I first call up Dives the lost. Let him be sworn. He was a man of great influence in the world. There is no reason why he should falsify. *Question*: "Dives, is there a perdition?" *Answer*: "Yes, I have just come from it. It is torment. I can't get anything there to cool my tongue. I want a drop of water, but I can't get it. Do send word to my five brothers, that they come not into suffering." Universalism tries to impeach this witness by saying it is all allegory. Lazarus the saved is the Gentile converted, and Dives, who lifted up his eyes in hell, being in torment, is the Jew whose spiritual privileges were cut off in this world! If the Lord Jesus Christ were going to make an allegory He would not make one so imbecile as that. I do not wonder that Universalists have wrenched that passage until they got red in the face, to make it mean something else; but in all ages of the past, and in all ages of the future, the common-sense reading of that Scripture is that Lazarus went to heaven and Dives went to hell, and there was a gulf fixed between them that they could never cross over.

The next witness I call in the case is an old bent-over man. It is Paul the Apostle. *Question*: "Paul, is there a perdition?" *Answer*: "In flaming fire taking vengeance upon those who know not God."

The next witness is a grey-bearded man, clothed in rough hair cloth. It is Isaiah the prophet. *Question*: "Isaiah, is there such a place as perdition?" *Answer*: "Their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched." The next witness looks as though he may have been very ruddy and beautiful once, but he has lost his beauty and ruddiness through much family trouble. It is David—David the psalmist. *Question*: "David, is there any perdition?" *Answer*: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."

The next witness is a very mild and lovable man. It is John the inspired. *Question*: "John, is there any such place as perdition?" *Answer*: "They shall drink of the wine of the wrath of Almighty God, poured without mixture in the cup of His indignation." And he stops a moment to take breath, and then he says: "They shall be tormented in fire and brimstone in the presence of the angels." And he stops again to take breath, and then says: "The smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever."

#### BUT THE MOST IMPORTANT WITNESS

is to come. He comes with feet blistered by the long way, with sickly looks from sleeplessness and exposure. It is the Son of God, He before whom we bow down ourselves, not worthy even to kiss His feet, and we say in all reverence: "O Jesus, is there a perdition?" And He answers: "At the end of the world the Son of Man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His Kingdom all things that offend, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." And after stopping a moment He says: "The children of the kingdom shall be cast out into utter darkness. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Then He stops a moment, and He resumes: "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

"Enough!" you say. "Isaiah, and David, and Paul, and John, and Christ, are enough." But I will not stop here. I bring you documentary evidence in the parable of the tares, already referred to in Christ's testimony. You remember in the parable of the tares that some people were thrown into a furnace of fire, while it says the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Do you know how the Universalists have squeezed and distorted that passage? They have done so until they have made the

furnace to be Jerusalem, and those who are to shine forth as the sun in their Father's kingdom are the Jews who did not happen to get killed in the earthly wars—an interpretation that would throw any audience into convulsions of laughter if the awfulness of the theme did not forbid merriment.

You said you would take the Bible for the standard of this trial. Gentlemen of the jury, now I hold you to your word, and I demand that you admit the awful truth that there is a future punishment. "But," say the Restorationists, "we admit there is a future punishment, but it comes to an end." My good friends, when will it come to an end? I think we shall have to call back some of the witnesses we have sworn in this case. "John, the inspired, what is the duration of that punishment?" He answers: "The smoke of their torment ascendeth up *for ever and ever*." How long is that? I call up Isaiah again. "Isaiah, how long does this punishment last?" "Their worm *dieth not*, their fire is *not quenched*." I call up Paul again. He says: "They shall be punished with *everlasting* destruction in the presence of the Lord." I ask reverently, again, the Lord Jesus Christ how long this punishment lasts, and He replies: "These shall go away into *everlasting* punishment." And He says again: "Depart, ye cursed, into *everlasting* fire." I leave it to your common sense what that means, what it must mean.

"But," say a great many, "you ought to go back to the Greek, and find out that that word everlasting don't mean what you have been representing it to mean." So there are persons who could not parse a Greek sentence to

SAVE THEMSELVES FROM BEING HANGED,

and who do not know the difference between *kappa* and *epsilon*, who talk about Greek. I reply, if there had been a

great difference between the original and our translation, God would before this have given it to us in plain English, so that we who do not know Greek could understand it. You cannot make me believe that God would keep the truth as to our eternal destiny covered in a heap of Greek roots. Do you want to be learned? Come now and let us all be learned together, and go back and read that passage: "These shall go away into *everlasting* punishment, but the righteous into life *eternal*." The same Greek word in one place is translated "everlasting" and in the other "eternal;" and if you bedwarf the word "everlasting," you must bedwarf the word "eternal." If you dwindle up the sufferings of the lost, then you must dwindle up the rejoicings of the saved. The same effort which would break a chain would snap a harp-string. The same effort that would uprear a dungeon would pull down a mansion. The same effort that would stop a groan would choke a hallelujah. "These shall go away into *everlasting* punishment, but the righteous into life *eternal*." If in the one case the sufferings are not to be eternal, in the other case the rejoicings are not to be eternal. But there is nothing that makes me so tired as being learned, and so I come back from the Greek to the plain English translation, good enough for you and good enough for me. This Bible says that a man who commits the unpardonable sin shall be forgiven neither in this world nor in the world to come. What does that mean? Where is your restoration after the grave? "He shall be forgiven neither in this world nor in the world to come." You Restorationists, put your hand-screw on that. Try to twist that around, so it shall not mean what God here makes it to mean. Shall neither be forgiven in this world nor in the world that is to come!

O, my friends, either throw overboard your Bible or throw overboard Universalism. I press you to that choice to-day,

and you must make it. The whole Bible is against Universalism. Ezekiel is against it. Jeremiah is against it. Isaiah is against it. David is against it. Matthew is against it. Mark is against it. Luke is against it. John is against it. Romans is against it. Corinthians is against it. Thessalonians is against it. Revelation is against it. Now, I do not at this moment say that the Bible is inspired or even a virtuous book; but I do say, if the Bible is right, then Universalism is wrong—awfully wrong, outrageously wrong, infinitely wrong, everlastingly wrong.

STILL FURTHER: UNIVERSALISM IS UNREASONABLE.

Here is a railroad map. There is a long line of railroads reaching from New York to California. There is a line of railroads reaching from New York to Boston. There is a line of railroads reaching from New York to Philadelphia. They will come out at the same place. "No," you say, "they do not." You tell me that one ends in Boston, and the other in Philadelphia, and the other in San Francisco. I deny it. If you want me to believe that, prove it. "Well," you say, "I can very easily prove it. One railroad goes north, and the other south, and the other goes west." "Oh," I say, "you are right. I admit you are right. I yield the position." In other words, you argue that railroads that go in opposite directions cannot come out at the same place. Now, here are two roads for the soul's travel. The one is faith in Christ, helpful services to others, a struggle for consecration, and doing better all the way up. That is one road. Howard went that road. Wilberforce went that road. Paul went that road. Ten thousand times ten thousand went that road. Here is the other road. It starts with the rejection of Jesus Christ. It keeps on in sin and in rebellion against God all the way through. Robespierre went on that road. Nero went on that road. All the bad people that

have ever lived and died have gone on that road, and the two roads being in opposite directions, they must come out at opposite termini. Nothing but moral insanity can make you think any differently. By inexorable geometry, by common sense, by a calculation plainer than that twice three are six, you come to the conclusion that opposite directions of travel must bring opposite eternal destinies.

"But," say the Restorationists, "the punishment in the lost world, which we admit, is reformatory, and the souls that go there will gradually struggle up into thorough felicity." Absurdity infinite! Two Sabbaths ago, while I stood in this place, talking, among other things, about the outrages of the Raymond-street Jail—outrages which, I have been informed by prominent official authority in this city, I did not more than half state—at that very moment there was a girl of fifteen years in that Raymond-street Jail imploring that she might be in a cell alone. She said: "These wretches around here are telling me filthy stories all the time. I can't stand it here. I want to be alone." She knew what every one knows, that bad associations are not reformatory. And yet you try to make me believe that in that world, where all the desperadoes and abandoned have gone, the soul is going to get better. Will the thieves make it honest? Will the libertines make it pure? Will the blasphemers make it holy?

#### THE PERDITION OF UNGODLY MEN

is a very poor reform school. By inevitable law you know that bad society makes people worse, and that Herod on earth was mild and beautiful compared with what he is now, and that the men who died on the scaffold for their crimes were benefactors and philanthropists compared with their present character. Worse, and getting worse. But if from that world they struggle out—have any of them got out

yet?—will Robespierre be in heaven in time to welcome the grandchildren of the men he butchered? Will James Fisk be in heaven in time to welcome the widows and orphans whose property he swamped in a Wall-street panic? O, what a delicious, savory place heaven would be if the wretches who went down into their graves unwashed got there. You have a child in heaven, you have a sister in heaven—do you think of them as being in that kind of society?

If, as the great majority of the Universalists argue, there is no hell, tell me then where the people of Sodom and Gomorrah went? If all is fair beyond the line of this world, irrespective of our character here, then the men who stole Charlie Ross, and who were shot for their crimes, are better off to-day than the parents who sit, frenzied with grief, waiting for the pattering of the feet of the little captive; then Ananias was better off than Sapphira, for he lied first, and so beat his wife three or four minutes into glory. *There is a hell.* Your common sense declares it.

Still further: Universalism is, willingly or unwillingly, the *abettor of bad morals*. It is the high-priest of suicide. How many people there have been who have got tired of their troubles, and said: "Here, I must get out of these troubles. I will just take my own life, then I will be free. There is nothing between me and glory but a phial of laudanum or a revolver;" and so he swallowed the laudanum or cracked the revolver, and that has been the end of it. He steps right over into glory. He has been taught so. You know that all those who in their right mind commit suicide—for I speak not of those who are deranged and take their own lives, they are not responsible for anything they do—but I say that the majority of those who in their seeming right mind take their own lives, leave a letter on the table, saying: "Meet me in heaven." They are going *right over*. O, if that doctrine be true, why do not some of

you who have been struggling with overwhelming troubles put an end to them, and buy an overdose of *belladonna* on your way home, or this afternoon leap from the top of your house and get straight into glory?

“For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,  
The oppressor’s wrong, the proud man’s contumely,  
When he himself might his quietus make  
With a bare bodkin?”

Why does he not do it? It is because the man knows that, if in his sane moments he takes his own life,

#### HE DROPS INTO RUIN.

A man near Utica, New York, sent for his pastor, a Universalist minister, and said to him: “If I should die now would I go to heaven?” “Most certainly,” the minister replied. “You think there is no possible doubt about it?” “None at all, sir.” “Well,” said the man, “I have had trouble enough, now I am going away from it. I am going to leave the world, and I am going now;” and he drew a pistol and put it to his own temple, when the minister clutched his arm and said: “Stop! stop! there may be a hell.” Then the man turned to the minister and said: “You preach what you don’t believe. You are a deceiver.” If there be a man in this house to-day who has at any time had the idea of taking his own life, let me persuade you not to sit down and write: “Meet me in heaven;” you will not go there. The fact that there is a perdition is the mightiest moral restraint that the world has ever felt. When you try to upset this doctrine of a future place of punishment you are abetting crime. Universalist Churches in our cities are surrounded by so many Churches of other kinds that you cannot see their full influence; but in the New England villages, or the villages at the far West, where there is only one Church, and that a Universalist Church, or where the Universalist Church is dominant over all others—



in such villages, inevitably and always, you find profane swearing, drunkenness, Sabbath-breaking, lust, and every form of abomination, rampant. Give the doctrine of Universalism full swing in any village, or in any city, and it consumes it—financially, morally, and spiritually. I have seen its effects again and again in the villages at the West, where it left not one green thing. I tell you that doctrine is the foe of God and man; and, come fair or foul, I hold it up in the presence of this audience for your denunciation. "Thou shalt not surely die," was the first plaister that the devil ever spread; but he spread it so large there is enough to salve the consciences of ages.

Still further: Universalism is *withering to all earnestness in soul-saving*. What is the matter with a great many of the Protestant Churches to-day? They have this disease of Universalism in a milder form. They adopt the Heidelberg Catechism or the Westminster Assembly, or they sit in Methodist conferences, or in Baptist associations; but there is so much Universalism in the air, they are cowed down. They dare not preach a rugged Gospel. They say "heaven" with a shout, but

THEY SAY "HELL" WITH A WHISPER,

so that the people do not know exactly what they did say, and the Calvinists think they said "hell," and the restorationists think they said "bell," and the merchants think they said "sell," and so they are all satisfied. O, I abhor this namby-pambyism in religion. What is the reason we do not have any more conversions in our Churches? It is because we do not sufficiently preach rewards and punishments. We tell the righteous it shall be well with them; but not in the same emphasis do we tell the wicked it shall be ill with them. Why did Samuel Davies and Nettleton, and Baxter, and the Wesleys, and Whitefield, and

Osborne, and Daniel Baker count the conversions under their ministry by tens and tens of thousands? It was because their sermons rang with the doxologies of the saved, and crackled with the fires of the lost. Did you ever hear of a great awakening in a Universalist Church? Never. What would they get wakened about? They are all safe, always have been safe, always will be. What is the use of the jailor's rushing through between the falling walls of the prison, crying: "What must I do to be saved?" He was safe before the prison began to rock. What is the use of the sinking man's crying: "Lord, save; I perish?" Stop your noise. The water is not up to your chin! What is the use of making such a fuss about three thousand souls saved on the Day of Pentecost? They were as saved before as they were after. What did Paul mean when he feared becoming a cast-away? Cast-away on what coast? The coast of everlasting love? Why are the wicked in the last day represented as crying out: "Rocks and mountains fall on us, and hide us from the face of the Lamb?" No danger! O, if we want to bring souls to Jesus Christ, men and women of God, we must tell the whole truth, and hide none of it. What means that picture, in some of the old books, representing Martin Luther almost bent double by a paroxysm of earnestness while he is preaching about men's souls? What meant Thomas Chalmers, standing in his Edinburgh pulpit, warning people to flee from the wrath to come until he actually foamed at the mouth? Why did John Summerfield and Robert McCheyne preach themselves so early in the grave? Why was it that when Mr. Venn described the perils of an immortal soul, history tells us the audience "dropped like slacked lime?" Why was Edward Payson so anxious for the salvation of men that his doctors said his body was in a continuous fever? O, my brethren, what we in the ministry most want is to

## BE ABOUSED, CONVICTED, MELTED,

re-baptized, surcharged with the power of the Lord God Almighty. Swinnich said a thing that made me quake body, mind, and soul, when I first read it. He said: "It is an awful thing to fall into a hell from under a pulpit; but what an awful thing to fall into hell *out* of a pulpit." O, that God would give us grace to see the infinite sham of modern Universalism, and give us wisdom to stop sewing pillows under the armsleeves. O, my soul, wake up! Ministers of Jesus Christ, in the United States of Great Britain, wake up! There *is* a hell, and it is our place to keep people out of it.

Still further: Universalism has ruined for eternity a great many souls. East-south-east of Boston there is a lighthouse called Minot's Ledge Lighthouse. It was with great difficulty that the Government, in 1857, put down but four stones, and in 1858 they put down but six layers of stone; but after a while the work was accomplished. It is very important that there should be a lighthouse there. When the wind is blowing from the north-east, and ships are coming on toward Boston harbour, if they happen to miss the harbour they go on that rock but for the lighthouse. I see one of the freight line of the Cunarders coming on towards Boston harbour. The wind is north-east. There are a hundred passengers on board the vessel. I slyly get into Minot's Ledge Lighthouse. I go up the winding stairs until I come to the top, and with a hammer I break the glass, and I blow out the light. The captain of the Cunarder is pacing the deck, not knowing exactly what to do. "The wind is from the north-east," he says. "It is getting pretty late to go in to-night, but we are not anywhere near Minot's Ledge Lighthouse. I am a little confused about the lights along the coast, but I think I will try it." Hark! There is a grating on the bottom of the steamer. There

is a quiver from stem to stern. Then there is a keeling over, and a *crash!* All lost! All lost! Whose fault was it? The captain's? No. Never a braver man walked the deck. Was it the crew's? No. They were faithful fellows. Whose fault? *Mine*, for I blew out the light. Now, let me say that every minister of the Gospel and every Christian man is a light-house keeper. Upon him is a greater responsibility than ever rested upon the man who keeps the Bell Rock Light-house, off Scotland, or the Barnegat, or Hatteras Lighthouse. God has kindled a great illumination on all the rocks of danger, saying: "Stand off! Yonder is your harbour. Yonder is your wharf. Yonder are your friends, waiting to greet you. Rocks here—nothing but rocks. Stand off!" What does Universalism do? It comes up, and blows out the light. It says: "Sail on. There are no rocks for immortal shipwreck. Sail on. All is well. All is well." O, what a responsibility. I would rather be the engineer of a rail-train with four or five hundred passengers coming on when the drawbridge is off, and know it, and yet not stop, than a Universalist minister taking a whole Church with him off the brink, giving them no warning, blowing no trumpet, never crying out: "The rocks! The rocks!" Universalism is

#### A DECEPTION HIGH AS HEAVEN

and deep as hell, and if it be let alone, it will ruin half the race. But it is not going to be let alone. The Church of God, as it rises up to its mission, will cry the alarm to the people, and there will go up prayer to God, so that He will flash upon the nations these tremendous realities.

If I live forty years to preach, and I expect to preach forty years longer, I want to spend the whole time in setting before men the two destinies of eternal life and eternal darkness. But if I should not live as long as that, and if this should

be the last sermon I shall ever preach, as it may be, then I want you to take this as my dying testimony: there is a heaven—there is a hell. Accept of Christ and you reach the one; reject Him, and you drop headlong into the other.

But it is time for this jury to render their verdict. I have shown you that Universalism is unscriptural; unreasonable; that it is destructive to good morals; that it is withering to all earnestness in saving souls; that it is the eternal discomfiture of a great many people. In courts of law, when the jury come in, they stand and render their verdict, the foreman giving the verdict, and the clerk of the court writing it down; but in this religious assemblage you must render the verdict in silence, seated, so far as you have room to be seated, God listening and angels recording.

If what I have said this morning is true, what are you going to do about it? What step will you take? My soul has been wrung with the awfulness of this theme. If God had not helped me, I should have fallen down between my chair and your pew; but I did not dare to hold back the theme. As I expect to meet my Maker, and my Judge, I did not dare to hide any of the truth; but I was all the time sustained with the idea that I could, before I got through, tell you how to get off from your peril; and that if I pointed you to the flaming sword, it was only to show you a refuge; and if I showed you a chasm it was only to show you a bridge over it. The Lord Jesus to-day breaks through all obstacles, and runs against the opposing spears, and tramples on the sharpened spikes, and springs into the midst of this assembly, and throws His arms around you, and begs you to be saved. Will you shake Him off? Will you hurl Him on his back? Will you trample on Him, putting one foot on His holy heart and the other on His mangled brow, and

## FROM THE CORPSE OF A MURDERED CHRIST

will you leap into woe? Stop! Stop! Stop! Jesus came to save you. By the tears that ran down His scarred cheek, by the blood that oozed from His whipped back, by the sweat of agony that stood out in beads upon His brow, by the dying groan which broke the heart of the rocks and made the sun faint dead away in the heavens—I beg you to accept of the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved. O, fling not away your immortal soul when so much has been done to ransom it. When you may be saved, why will you be lost? Some one suggested to me yesterday that there were some persons who consoled themselves by saying: “If I am to be lost, there will be a great many others with me, so I won’t care so much.” O, what a poor philosophy! When the Lake Shore railroad cars went off the track a year or two ago, and a hundred and fifty people were crushed, was it any mitigation of the sorrow that there were a hundred and fifty instead of one man? When three years ago, five hundred miles off Newfoundland, we thought our ship was making the last plunge, did the screams of seven hundred frenzied passengers mitigate the horrors of that night? O, no. If there is any man determined to be lost, better be lost alone than in a crowd; their sorrow added to your sorrow, their disaster added to your disaster. I cannot believe that there are any in this house who will be such fools as to reject the only salvation offered them this day in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Infinite Redeemer. I do not know whether my cheek turns pale at the thought; but I do know that my heart quakes as I cry out with Isaiah: “Who among us can dwell in devouring fire? Who of us can lie down in eternal burnings?” Men and women! there is only one name given under heaven among men, whereby you may be saved, and that is Jesus. “God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in Him

should not perish, but have everlasting life." Depend upon it, if you are lost it will not be God's fault. He has done everything to save you. It will not be Christ's fault. He has pleaded with blood-red earnestness for your salvation. It will not be the Holy Spirit's fault. He has this day stirred and entreated you mightily. If you are lost it will be your own fault. You will forge your own chains. You will write your own death-warrant. You will bolt and bar the door of heaven, and doubly bolt it, and doubly bar against your own soul, and you might as well this day, if that is your determination, make your valedictory, saying: "Farewell, O Church of God! I don't want the comfort of your sacraments. Farewell, O Holy Bible! I don't want your illumination. Farewell, O Holy Ghost! bother me no more about the great future. Farewell, O heaven! I don't want to hear thy clapping cymbals, nor to mingle in thy hallelujahs. Farewell, O my glorified kindred—father, mother, sister, brother, and my dear children who broke my heart when they went away from me. Farewell! Keep no longer a seat for me by your side at the heavenly banquet. I am not coming. I take another road. I make another choice. Across these spaces I fling this kiss of everlasting separation. Good-bye, good-bye. This is my eternal valedictory!"

"There is a death whose pang  
Outlasts the fleeting breath;  
O, what eternal horrors hang  
Around the second death!

"Lord God of truth and grace,  
Teach us that death to shun;  
Lest we be banished from Thy face,  
And evermore undone."

## THE LAMP.

"Thy word is a lamp."—*Psalms* cxix. 105.

FROM six o'clock last evening until six o'clock this morning darkness rested on our part of the earth, and every few hours there rolls a wave of natural night all over the nations. With lamps, and chandeliers, and torches, and lanterns, we try to drive out the night from houses and churches, and stores, and shops. He who invents a new kind of a light invents his own fortune and the fortune of his children. But there is a night of sin, and suffering, and shame, which needs another kind of illumination. Ancient philosophy made a lamp, but it was a dead failure, and the people kept crying out: "Give us a light! give us a light!" After awhile prophet, and evangelist, and apostle made a lamp. A coal from heaven struck it into a blaze, and uncounted multitudes of people with an open Bible before them cry out in rapture and in love: "Thy word is a lamp."

When, a few years ago, there was a great accident in Hartley Colliery, England, and two hundred persons lost their lives, the Queen telegraphed down to the scene of disaster: "Can we give you any help? Will you be able to get the men out? How many are lost? Give my sympathy to all the bereft." What consolation it was to the families who stood amid the consternation and the terror, that the throne of England throbbed in sympathy with their disaster! But I have to tell you to-day a more glorious truth, and that is, from the throne of God the King of heaven and earth telegraphs down through this Bible into the dungeons of our sin and suffering a message of pardon, of love, of sympathy, of comfort, of eternal life. Like some lighthouse on high promontory, blessed by ships passing through darkness and storm, so on the heights of God's love and grace there flames forth a light upon the great sea



of man's wretchedness and of God's providence, so that angels on their way earthward, and ransomed spirits on their way heavenward, and devils on their way hellward, pass through its flash, crying :

"THY WORD IS A LAMP."

You have four or five Bibles in your house—perhaps ten, perhaps twenty. They are such common property you do not appreciate them. If you had only one Bible, and for that you paid five hundred dollars—the price that was paid in olden time for a copy of the Scriptures—then you would more thoroughly appreciate it. I was once a colporteur for a few months in a vacation, and I came into a home of destitution. I saw a woman there eighty-five years of age, and I said to her: "May I give you a Bible?" "O," she replied: "a Bible would be of no use to me. I can't see to read. I used to read, but for twenty years I haven't been able to read a word." I pulled out of my satchel one of the copies of the Psalms of David and the New Testament in great, large, round type, and I said: "Now, put on your spectacles and see if you can't read this." She wiped her spectacles and put them on. "O, yes," she said: "why, I can see after all. I am very thankful to you. Why, yes, I see it: 'I love the Lord because He hath heard my voice and my'—O, yes, I can read it, I can read it." I wish that God to-day would make the Bible as new and fresh to us as it was to her!

I want to show you that the Bible is a lamp—a parlour lamp, a street lamp, a store lamp, a church lamp, a sepulchral lamp.

In parlours all aflash with gaslight, and gleaming mirror, and blazing chandelier, and candelabra, there may be Egyptian darkness; while in some plain room, which a *frugal* hand has spread with hospitality and refinement,

this one Lamp may cast a glow that makes it a fit place for heavenly coronations. We invoke no shadow to fall upon the hilarities of life. We would not have every song a dirge, and every picture a martyrdom, and every step a funeral pace. God's lamp hung in the parlour would chill no joy, would rend no harmony, would cheek no innocent laughter. On the contrary, it would bring out brighter colours in the picture; it would expose new gracefulness in the curtain; it would unroll new wreaths from the carpet; it would strike new music from the harp; it would throw new polish into the manners; it would kindle with light borrowed from the very throne of God all the refinements of society. O, that the Christ who was born in a barn would come to our parlour! We need His hand to sift the parlour music. We need His taste to assort the parlour literature. We need His voice to conduct the parlour conversation. We are apt to think of religion as being a rude, blundering thing, not fit to put its foot upon Axminster, or its clownish hands on beautiful adornments, or lift its voice amid the artistic and refined; so, while we have Jesus in the nursery when we teach our children to pray, and Jesus in the dining-hall when we ask His blessing upon our food, and Jesus in the sitting-room when we have family prayers, it is a simple fact that from ten thousand Christian homes in this country Christ is from one end of the year to the other shut out of the parlour. O, that housekeepers understood that the grace of God is the greatest accomplishment, and that no seat is too luxuriant for religion to sit in, and no arch too grand for religion to walk under, and no circle

## TOO BRILLIANT FOR RELIGION

to move in. If Christianity at last is to walk up the streets of heaven with seraphim and archangel, it is good enough

to go anywhere where you go or where I shall go. To purify the heart, to cleanse the life, to culture the taste, to expurgate all hypocrisy, and falsehood, and sham, we must have the Bible in the parlour. When Christian people come to spend an evening, they talk about the weather, and they talk about the scandal, and they talk about the crops, and they talk about the markets; but they do not talk about God, and Christ, and heaven. The thing we most want to-day in all our parlours is the lamp of the Bible.

Still further: the Bible is the *street lamp*. When night comes down on the city, crime goes forth to its worst achievements. Not only to show honest citizens where to walk, but to hinder the burglar, and assassin, and highwayman, and pickpocket, we must have artificial lights all over the city. I remember what consternation there was in Philadelphia when one night the gasworks were out of order and the whole city sat in darkness. Between eleven o'clock at night and three o'clock in the morning, in the dark and unlighted places of the town, crime has its holiday. If the lamplighter ceased his work for the week, the town would rot. But there is a darkness beyond all power of gaslight. What is the use of police-station, and almshouse, and watchman's club, if there be no moral and religious influence to sanction the law, and to purify the executive, and to hang over legal enactment the fear of God and an enlightened public opinion. When in a city crime runs rampant, and virtue is at a discount, and jails are full, and churches are empty, and the nights are hideous with the howl and the whoop of drunkards, and the saloons boil over with scum, and public officials think more of a bribe than they do of their own conscience, and when great tides of wickedness set down the streets—the first want of such a city as that is the *street lamp* of the Bible. Did you ever stand in a church tower and look down upon a city at night? It is

overwhelming. But you feel that beneath all that brilliancy of gaslight there is a surging sea of want, and suffering, and woe. History says that Dionysius had a great cave built for his prisoners. He was a cruel man, and he used to go to the top of the cave, put his ear to the opening and listen, and the groans and the sighings of the prisoners came up into his ear and

#### MADE MUSIC FOR HIM.

God stands at the head of our world, but for a different purpose, and with a different heart. He puts His ear to the dungeon, and every sigh comes up, stirring His sympathies, and every groan wounding His heart; and He listens and listens all night long. There is but one lamp that can throw light into the dungeon where the prisoner groans, into the hovel where the beggar pines, into the cellar where the drunkard wallows, into the alley where the libertine putrefies, into the madhouse where the maniac raves. Travellers in Africa tell us that they have seen serpents—a vast number of them—coiled together, and piled up in horrid fold above horrid fold; and then they would hear hundreds of them hissing at once, and the sight and the sound was appalling and unbearable. But if you should take the wickedness of our best of cities, and bring it all together in one place, and pile it up fold above fold, it would be a hissing horror and ghastliness that no human eye could look at without being blasted, and no human ear could hear without being stunned.

Now, how will all these scenes of iniquity in our cities be overcome? They will not be overcome until the Church, and the school, and a Christian printing-press kindle all around about us God's street lamp of the Bible. Send the Bible down that filthy alley, if you would have it cleansed. Send it against those decanters, if you would have them

smashed. Send it against those chains, if you would have them broken. Send it through all the ignorance of the city, if you would have it illumined as by a flash from heaven's morning. The Bible can do it—will do it. Gather all the ignorance, and the wickedness, and the vice of our cities in one great pile—Alps above Alps, Pyrenees above Pyrenees, Himalaya above Himalaya—and then give one little New Testament full swing against the side of that mountain, and down it would come, Alps after Alps, Pyrenees after Pyrenees, Himalaya after Himalaya. What is the difference between New York and Pekin? What is the difference between London and Madras? What is the difference between Edinburgh and Canton? No difference, save that which the Bible makes. O, city missionary; O, philanthropist; O, Christian, go everywhere, and kindle up these great street lamps of the Gospel; and our city, purified and cleansed, will proclaim what the Psalmist so long ago declared: "Thy Word is a lamp."

I know there are people who suppose that the vice of our cities is going to conquer the virtue of the people. I

DO NOT BELIEVE IT.

Let error and vice run, if you only let truth run along with them. Urged on by sceptic's shout, and transcendentalist's spur, let error run! God's angels of wrath are in hot pursuit, and quicker than eagle's beak clutcheth out a hawk's heart, God's vengeance will tear it to pieces. Let it run, if you only let God's Word run along with it.

Still further: the Bible is the best *store lamp*. Blessed is the merchant who under its glow reads his ledger, and transacts his business, and pockets his gains, and suffers his losses. It may be well to have a fine sky-light, to have a magnificent glass show-window, by night to have bronzed brackets spouting fire in a very palace of merchandize; but

if you have not this eternal lamp you had better quit keeping store. What is the reason so many who started in merchandize, with good principles, and fair prospects, and honourable intentions, have become gamblers, and defrauders, and knaves, and desperadoes, and liars, and thieves? They did not have the right kind of a store lamp. Why is it, in our day, merchandize is smitten with uncertainty, and three-fourths of the businesses of our great cities is only one huge species of gambling, and society is upturned by false assignments, and two-third acts, and repudiations, and imperilled trust-funds, and fraudulent certificates of stock, and wild schemes in railroads without any track, and banks without any capital, and cities without any houses, and joint-stock companies without any conscience? And why are ten thousand of our business men ridden with a night-mare enough to crush Hercules and Prometheus? It is the want of a right kind of store lamp. What ruined the merchant princes of Tyre—that great city of fairs, and bazaars, and palaces; her vessels of trade with cedar masts, and embroidered sails, and ivory benches, driven by fierce blasts on Northern waters, and then dropping down on glassy Indian seas; bringing wine from Helbon, and chariot cloths from Dedan, and gold and spices from Rahmah, and emerald and agate from Syria; her waters foaming with innumerable keels; her store-houses bursting with the treasures of all nations—that queen of cities, on a throne of ivory and ebony, under a crown of gold, and pearl, and diamond, and carbuncle, and chrysopras? The want of a right kind of store lamp. If the principles of religion had ruled in her trade, do you suppose that dry rot would have sunk the ships, and that vermin would have eaten up her robes, and that God's mills would have ground up the agate, and that fishermen would dry their nets on the rocks which once were awake with the roar and tread of a great metropolis?

## O, WHAT THRONES HAVE FALLEN,

what monuments have crumbled, what fleets have sunk, what statues have been defaced, what barbarisms have been created, what civilization retarded, what nations damned, all for the want of the right kind of a store lamp. Men of business! take your Bibles with you to-morrow morning. Place them in your store or shop. Do not be ashamed if anybody at noon finds you reading the Scriptures. It is safe always to do business by its teachings. There was a young man in a store in Boston, standing behind the counter, selling goods. A gentleman came in, and asked for some Middlesex cloths. "O," said the young man, "we haven't any Middlesex cloths, but here is something just as good." "No," replied the gentleman, "I don't want them;" and he passed out. The head man of the firm came down to the young man, and said: "What did that man want?" "He wanted Middlesex cloths," replied the young man. "Why didn't you tell him they were Middlesex cloths?" "Because they were not, sir." "Then you can take your hat, and leave." The young man took his hat, and left. He went into merchandize in Cincinnati, went on up till he became a merchant prince, and not more eminent for wealth than for piety. God will never let a young man suffer for doing right. Full justice may not be done him in this world; but in the last day, before an assembled universe, it will be found out whether or not they were Middlesex cloths.

Still further: the Bible is the best *church lamp*. I care not how many chandeliers there may be in a church, how many brilliant lights there may be, the Word of God is the best church lamp. O, is there anything more beautiful than an audience gathered on the Sabbath for Christian worship? There may be no dazzle of theatric assemblage, there may be no glitter of foot-lights, there may be no allegoric *images* blossoming from pit to dome; but there is something

in the place and in the occasion that makes it supernatural. In the light of this lamp I see your faces kindle with great joy. Glorious church lamp, this Bible. Luther found it in the cloister at Erfurt, and he lifted it until the monasteries and cathedrals of Germany, and Italy, and France, and England, and the world saw its illumination. It shone under the breast-plate of sacerdotal authority; and in the mosques of Turkey, and in the pagodas of India, and in the ice huts of Greenland, and in the mud hovels of Africa, and in the temples of China, God's regenerated children, in musical Tamil, and sweet Italian, and nasal Chinese, and harsh Choctaw, cried out: "Thy Word is a lamp." It throws its light on the pulpit, making a bulwark of truth; on the baptismal cup, until its waters

GLITTER LIKE THE CRYSTALS OF HEAVEN.

It strikes penitence into the prayers and gladness into the thanksgiving. It changes into a church John Bunyan's prison, and Covenanters' cave, and Calvin's castle, and Huss's stake, and Hugh McKail's scaffold of martyrdom. Zwinglius carried it into Switzerland, and John Wickfield into England, and John Knox into Scotland, and Jehudi Ashman into Africa. Begone, ye scoffers! Down to the lowest pit, ye emissaries of darkness! for by the throne of an omnipotent judgment I declare it that all iniquity shall fall, and all bondage be broken, and all wounds be healed, and all darkness be dispelled, when God's truth shall go forth "as a lamp that burneth." We want no sappers or miners to level the wall; we want no axemen or engineers to prepare the way; we want no glittering steel, or booming gun, or howling Hotchkiss shell to get us the victory, for the mountains are full of horses and chariots of fire. Hallelujah! for the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord Jesus Christ. I do not wonder that the



stranger who sat the other day beside me in the rail-car reading his Bible, after he had concluded his reading, closed it, and kissed it, and put it in his pocket. There have been times when you did the same. When all else failed you, it was so bright, it was so loving, it was so sympathetic a book that you too kissed it.

Still further: the Bible is a *sepulchral lamp*. You know that the ancient Egyptians used to keep lights burning in the tombs of their dead. These lights were kept up for scores, even hundreds, of years. Friends would come from generation to generation and put oil in the lamps, and it was considered a disaster if those lamps went out. You and I will some day go down into the house of the dead. Some have looked upon it as an unknown land, and when they have thought of it, their knees have knocked together and their hearts fainted. There were whole generations of men that had no comfort about death, no view of the eternal world, and whenever they brought their friends and put them away into the dust, they said, without any alleviation: "This is horrid, this is horrid." And it was. The grave is

#### THE DEEPEST, GHASTLIEST PIT

that a man ever looks in, unless the lamp of God's word flashes into it. For whole ages men thought that the sepulchre was a den where a great monster gorged himself on human carcasses. "I will put an end to that," said Jesus of Nazareth; "I will with mine own voice go down and make darkness flee;" and as He stepped out from the gate of heaven, all the graveyards of earth cried: "Come! Come!" And He came down, bringing a great many beautiful lights, and above this babe's grave He hung a light, and over this mother's tomb He hung a light, and over this wife's grave He hung a light, and over all the sleeping-places of the Christian dead He hung a light. Then He

uttered His voice, and it ran along under the ground from city to city, and along under the sea from continent to continent, until mausoleum, and sarcophagus, and sepulchre throbbed with the joy—"I am the resurrection and the life, he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." And now if Greenwood, and Laurel Hill, and Mount Auburn could break their beautiful silence and should speak, their lips of bronze and granite would break forth in the strains of my text: "Thy word is a lamp."

O ye bruised souls! O ye who have been cutting yourselves among the tombs! O ye who have been sowing seed for the resurrection day! O ye of the broken heart! I come out to-day and put in your hand this glorious Gospel lamp. It will throw a glow of consolation over your bereft spirit. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." "They that sow in tears will reap in joy." Rabbi Mier went off from home to be gone a few days, and left two beautiful boys. While he was gone the two lads died. Rabbi Mier returned, not knowing that anything had happened. His Christian wife knew he would be overcome with grief, and she met him at the door and said to him: "My husband, I once had two beautiful jewels loaned to me. I had them for a little while. And do you know, while you were gone the owner came for them. Ought I to have given them?" "Of course," said Rabbi Mier: "you ought to have given them up, you say they were only loaned." Then she called her husband to the side-room and removed the cloth that covered the dead children. After Rabbi Mier had for a few moments given way to his grief, he rose up and said: "Now

#### I KNOW WHAT YOU MEANT

by the borrowed jewels. The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord." And

so Rabbi Mier was comforted. Let this sepulchral light gild all the graves of your dead. May this lamp of the text be set in all your parlours, in all your streets, in all your stores, in all your churches, in all your sepulchres! Amen.

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### UNITARIANISM *VERSUS* THE BIBLE.

"Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen."—*Romans* x. 5.

**P**AUL was a reckless man in always telling the whole truth; it mattered not who it hit or what theological system it upset. In this one sentence he makes a world of trouble for all Arians and Socinians, and gives a cud for scepticism to chew on for the next thousand years. We must proceed skilfully to twist this passage of Scripture, or we shall have to admit the Deity of Jesus Christ. I roll up my sleeves for the work, and begin by saying, perhaps this is a wrong version. No, all the versions agree—Syriac, Ethiopic, Latin, Arabic. Perhaps this word God means a being of great power, but not the Deity. It is God "over all." But perhaps this word God refers to the first person of the Trinity—God the Father. No; it is "*Christ* came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen." Whichever way I take it, and when I turn it upside down, and when I try to read it in every possible shape, I am compelled to leave it as all have been compelled to leave it who have gone before me, an incontrovertible proof of the eternal and magnificent Godhead of the Lord Jesus Christ. "Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen."

About the differences between the evangelical denominations of Christians, I have no concern. If I could by the turning over of my hand decide whether finally all the world shall be Methodists, or Baptists, or Episcopalians, or Con-

gregationalists, or Presbyterians, I would not turn over my hand ; but between Unitarianism, which disbelieves the deity of Christ, and Trinitarianism, which argues His Divine nature, there is a difference as wide as eternity. If Christ be not a God, then we are base idolators. If Christ be God, then those who deny it are blasphemers. To that Christological question we come this morning, and may God help us to do right in a question where mistake is infinite.

I suppose we are all willing to take the Bible as our standard. It requires as much faith to be an infidel as to be a Christian ; but it is faith in a different direction. The Christian believes in the statements of Moses and Isaiah, and David, and Matthew, and Mark, and Luke, and Paul. The infidel believes in the statement of the Freethinkers. We have faith in one class of men ; they have faith in another class of men. But as I suppose the vast majority of the people in the audience this morning are willing to take the Bible as their guide in morals and religion, I shall make this book my starting point.

You may be aware that the two great generals who have marshalled the largest army of Unitarian troops are Strauss and Renan. The multitudes of the slain under them will never be counted until the day when the archangel sounds

#### THE ROLL CALL OF THE RESURRECTION.

These men, and all men who have sympathy with them, begin by attacking the fortress of the miracles. They know that when once they have captured that fortress, Christianity must surrender. The great German exegete says that all the miracles are myths. The great French exegete says that all the miracles are legends. They must somehow or other explain away everything supernatural in the Bible—everything supernatural in the life of Christ—though to accomplish that they must go up the greatest absurdity.

They prefer the miracles of human nonsense rather than the grand miracles of Jesus Christ. They say, for instance, that the miraculous birth of Christ was a myth, just as it is a fanciful idea that Romulus was born of Rhea Sylvia and the god Mars. They say that Christ did not feed five thousand with a few loaves of bread ; that is only a myth which got mixed up with the distribution of twenty loaves among a hundred people by Elisha. They say Christ did not turn the water into wine ; that was only an improvement on the old Egyptian plague by which water was turned into blood. They say no star pointed down to the manger where Jesus laid ; that was only the flash of a passing lantern. They say that Christ's sweating great drops of blood in Gethsemane was not very astonishing, for He had been exposed to the night, and had been taken suddenly physically ill. They say no tongues of fire sat on the heads of the disciples at the Pentecost ; it was only a great thunder-storm, and the air was full of electricity, and it snapped and flew all around about the heads of the disciples. They say that Mary and Martha, and Lazarus, and Christ made up their minds it was necessary to get up an excitement in order to forward their religion, and so they resolved to play funeral, and Lazarus consented to be the corpse, and Mary and Martha consented to be mourners, and Christ consented to be the chief operator. I, of course, put it in my own words, but state accurately their meaning. They say that the four Gospels are spurious, written by superstitious or lying men, and that they were backed up by people who were to die and actually did die for a thing they did not believe. Now I take back the limited remark I made a moment ago, and say that it requires a thousandfold more credulity and faith to be an infidel than to be a Christian, and that if Christianity demands that the whale swallow Jonah, then scepticism demands that Jonah swallow the whale.



I propose this morning to show you, so far as the Lord may help me, that Jesus Christ is God. I shall prove it, first, from what inspired men say of Him; then from what He said of Himself; then from His wonderful achievements.

“GET A GOOD FAT TEXT TO START WITH,”

said Dr. Dudlow, our grand old theological professor. If I never had such a text before, I have one this morning: “Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.” Not over Solomon’s throne; not higher than David’s throne; not higher than Cæsar’s; not higher than the Henrys’, than the Fredericks’, than the Louis’, than Napoleon’s, than Victoria’s. O, yes. Gather all those thrones and pile them up, and my text overspans them as easily as a rainbow spans the mountain-top. “Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.”

The Bible says: “all things were made by Him.” Stop! Does not that prove too much? He did not make the Mediterranean, did He? not Mount Lebanon? nor the Alps? not Mount Washington? not the earth? not the stars? not the universe? Yes, all things were made by Him. And lest we should be so stupid as not to understand it, the apostle concludes by saying: “Without Him was not anything made that was made.” Why, then, He must have been a God.

The Bible says: “At the name of Jesus Christ every knee shall bow, of things on earth, and things in heaven.” See all heaven coming down on their knees—martyrs on their knees, apostles on their knees, confessors on their knees, the archangel on his knees. Before whom? A man? No, a God.

The Bible goes on to say that “every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.” Malayan, Bornesian, Mexican, Persian, Italian, German, Spanish, French, English—every

tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. Why, He must be a God. The Bible says: "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Men change; the body changes entirely in seven years, the mind changes, the heart changes; but "Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." He must be a God.

Philosophers say that it is gravitation, the centripetal and centrifugal forces, which keep the worlds from clashing and from demolition; but Paul says that Christ's arm is the axle on which everything turns, and that His hand is the socket in which everything is set; "*upholding*, holding all things by the word of His power." He must be a God.

But I go on in the next place and see what Christ said of Himself. Every person ought to know more about himself than anybody else does. If I ask you where you were born, and you say: "I was born in Chester, England, or Dublin, or New Orleans," I would believe you. Why? Because you ought to know—it is a matter that pertains to yourself. If I ask you whether you can lift three or four hundred pounds, and you said yes, I would believe you. You ought to know. If I ask you how much money you have—a hundred or a hundred thousand dollars—and you tell me, I believe you, because you, being an honest man, will tell me truth. Now I ask if Christ ought not to know whether or not He is God? I ask his age. He says, in so many words:

"BEFORE ABRAHAM WAS, I AM."

Abraham had been dead two thousand and twenty-eight years. Was Christ two thousand and twenty-eight years old? He says so. In Revelations He says: "I am Alpha;" Alpha being the first letter of the Greek alphabet, it was as much as to say: "I am the A of the great alphabet of all the centuries." Ought not He to know?

Could Christ be in a thousand places at the same time?

He said so. He intimates that He can be in Madras, in Stockholm, in Pekin, in San Francisco, in Constantinople at the same time. "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." The faculty of everywhereativeness, is it a human or a Divine attribute? Lest we should think that this power of everywhereativeness should give out, Christ intimates that He is going to keep on, and that on the day before the world is burned up He will be in all the prayer-meetings in Europe, Africa, and North and South America; for He declares in so many words: "Lo! I am with you alway, even *unto the end of the world!*" He is a God! He is a God!

He takes Divine honours. He calls himself the Lord of men, the Lord of angels, the Lord of devils. Is He not? If He is not, then He is the grandest fraud that was ever enacted. To-morrow morning, a man comes into your store in New York and he says: "I am Mr. Laird, the great ship-builder of Liverpool. I built the *Alabama*. I have built a great many fine ships." You treat him with a great deal of consideration; but you find out after awhile that he is not Mr. Laird, and that he never built anything. What is that man? An impostor. Now Christ said that He built the earth—built all things. Did He build the earth or did He not? If He did, He was a God; if He did not, He was an impostor. A man with a Jewish countenance and German accent comes into your store. He says: "I am Rothschild, the banker, of London. I hold the wealth of nations in my vest pocket. I loaned that money to Italy and to Austria." You treat him with a great deal of consideration for awhile; but suppose you find out that he is not a banker, that he does not own a single dollar in all the world? What is that man? An impostor. Now Christ comes and He says He owns this world, He owns the next, He owns all the glories of land and sea, He professes to be vast in His possessions.



Is He in the possession of all these things? Does He own them all? If He does not, what is He?

AN IMPOSTOR.

A man with venerable aspect and grey beard comes into the White House at Washington. He says to the President, "I am King William of Germany. I have come over *incognito* for the purpose of recreation and amusement. I gained the victory at Sedan. I have castles in Berlin and Dresden." Suppose after awhile the President finds that he has no castles, and that he is not the King; what is he then? An impostor. Now, the Lord Jesus Christ professed to be King, eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God. If He was not, what was He? I appeal to your common sense. He was either God, or He was a villain. Strauss saw that alternative, and he says that Christ was sinful in taking homage that did not belong to Him. Renan saw that alternative, and says that Christ, not through his own fault, but through the fault of others, lost some of the purity of His conscience, and slyly intimates that dishonourable women may have damaged His soul. Anything but admit that Christ is God.

I have shown you that Christ was God, from what inspired men have said of Him and from what He said of Himself; now I want to show you that He was God from His wonderful achievements. I suppose that all believe the Bible. If you do not, what do you do in the Brooklyn Tabernacle? Why do you not go over to-day and join the infidel club in Broadway? Why do you not go and kiss the foot of the new statue of Tom Payne they are rearing in Boston? Why do you not take your hat, and not stealing the hymn-book, go out and find associates among men who do not believe in the Word of God, the only foundation for good government and for common honesty? We in this church are among

the deluded souls and the narrow-heads who believe the whole Bible, and take it down in one swallow as easily as you take down a ripe strawberry. Supposing that you admit the Bible to be true, let us go out and see the Saviour's achievements—surgical, alimentary, marine, mortuary.

Surgical achievements? Did you ever, in all the scientific journals of the world, see such wonderful operations as He performed? He used no knife. He carried no splints. He employed no compress. He never made a patient squirm under cauterization. He never tied an artery, and yet, behold Him. With one word he stuck fast Malchus's amputated ear. He stirred dust and spittle into a salve, with which He made the man who was born blind, without optic nerve, cornea, or crystalline lens, open his eyes on the glorious sunlight. He beat music on the drum of the deaf ear. He straightened a woman who, through contraction of muscles, had been bent almost double for nigh two decades. He made a man who had not used his limbs for thirty-eight years shoulder his mattress and walk off. Sir Astley Cooper, Abernethy, and Valentine Mott stood powerless before a withered arm. This

#### DOCTOR OF OMNIPOTENT SURGERY

comes up to the man with the lifeless, useless, shrivelled arm, and He says to him: "Stretch forth thy hand." The man stretched it forth just as good as the other. This was a God! This was a God!

Alimentary achievements? A lad comes with five loaves with which he expected to make a speculation; perhaps having bought them for five pennies, and expecting to sell them for ten pennies, and thus double his money. Lo! Christ takes those loaves, and from them performs a miracle with which he satisfies seven thousand famishing people. When the Saviour's mother went into a neighbour's house

to help get up a wedding-party, and by a calculation she saw that they had made a mistake in the amount of beverage that was requisite, she calls Christ for help; and Christ, to relieve the awkward embarrassment, not through slow decay of fermentation, but by one word, makes a hundred and thirty gallons of pure wine.

Marine achievements? Do you not remember how He brought around a whole school of fish into the net of the men who were mourning over their poor luck, and how they had to halloo to the people in the other boat, and then both ships were loaded down to the water's edge with game, so that the sailors had to walk cautiously from larboard to starboard lest the boat sink. And then when the squall came down through the mountain gorge to the water, and Gennessaret with long white locks of foam rose up to battle it, and the vessel dropped into the trough, and shipped a sea, and the loosened sails cracked in the tornado; how Christ rose from the back part of the vessel, and came on across the staggering ship until He came to the prow; and wiping the spray from His forehead, hushed the crying tempest on the knee of His omnipotence. O, was it a man who wrestled down the storm? Was it a man who, with both feet trampled Gennessaret into a smooth floor?

But look at His mortuary achievements. Let all the psychologists and anatomists of the world go to Westminster Abbey, and try to wake Queen Elizabeth, or Henry VIII. All the ingenuity of man never yet brought the dead to life. But look at that dead girl at Capernaum. What a pity that she should die so early, and when the world is so fair. She is only twelve years old. Feel of the hands. Feel of the brow. Dead. Dead. The house is full of uproar and wailing. What does Christ do? He comes and takes that little girl by the hand, and no sooner has He touched her hand than her eyes open, and her heart starts, and the white

lily of death flushes into the red rose of life, and she rushes into the arms of her rejoicing relatives. Who was it that raised her up? Was it a man, or was it a God?

What is that crying in Bethany? Mary crying, Martha crying, Jesus crying, and the neighbours crying.

#### WHAT IS THE MATTER?

Lazarus is dead. The sisters think they will never again see him, never have him sit at the table again. Poor things! Since their father died they have depended upon Lazarus for almost everything. Jesus comes down to the excavation in the rock, in one of the side niches of which Lazarus sleeps in death. Jesus generally spoke in gentle articulations, but now He lets out His voice to full strength, until it rings through all the labyrinths and avenues of the rock: "Lazarus, come forth!" And Lazarus slides down from the side niche into the main avenue of the rock, and stands a living man before the abashed and confounded spectators. Who was it that stood at the mouth of that cave, and uttered that potent word? Was it a man? Tell that to the lunatics in Bloomingdale Asylum. It was Christ, the everywhere present, the everlasting, the omniscient, the omnipotent God! But there is one test which will show you whether Christ is God or not. The recital of that one verse ought to blanch the cheeks of some with alarm, and kindle the faces of others with eternal sunrise: "We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ." The world will be stunned by a blow that will make it stagger mid heaven; the stars will scatter like dried leaves in an equinox; the graveyards will unroll the bodies, and the clouds will unroll the spirits, and soul and flesh will come together in incorruptible conjunction. Hark to the loud wash of the retreating sea, and the baying of the advancing thunders, and the sweeping of winged cohorts! Smoke and darkness,

and fire and earthquake, and shouting, shouting, shouting, wailing, wailing, wailing. On the one side, in piled up galleries of light, are the one hundred and forty and four thousand—yea, the quintillions of the saved; and as they take their seats, I feel as if I must drop under the insufferable radiance. On the other side is piled up, in galleries of thunder-cloud, the frowning, glaring, dying populations of the wrath to come. Before me, and between the two galleries, is a throne. It is very high. It stands on two burnished pillars—justice and mercy. It is stupendous with awards and condemnations. Look; but half hide your eyes, lest they be put out in the excess of vision. There is a throne, but no one is seated on it. Who shall occupy it? Will you go up and take it? “No,” you say: “I am only dust and ashes.” Show me some man that is fit to take it, in all ages. Lord Mansfield? No. Solomon? No. Isaiah? No. Paul? No. Their foot would consume at the first touch of the step of that throne. Even Gabriel dare not go up on it. Michael, the archangel, would rather bow down, pulling his right wing over his left, and both over his face, and cry: “Holy!” But here is one ascending that throne.

#### HIS BACK IS TOWARD US.

He goes step above step, height above height, until He comes to the apex. Then, turning around, so that all nations can see Him, we behold it is Christ; and all earth, and heaven, and hell fall on the knee, and cry out: “It is a God! It is a God!”

There is great comfort in my subject. It is God who came down in Jesus Christ to save us. Do you think only a man could have made an atonement for millions of the race? Does your common sense teach you that? I tell you if Christ is not God the redemption of our race is a dead failure. We want a Divine arm to lift our burden. We want a Divine endurance to carry our pang. We want a

Divine expiation to take away our sin; and "Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen."

God also comes down in Christ to comfort you. Sometimes our troubles are so great, human sympathy does not seem to be sufficient for them. O ye who cried all last night because of loneliness and bereavement, I want to tell you that it is your Maker and your God that comes this day to comfort you. When there are children in the house, and the mother dies, then you know that the father has to be more gentle than ever, and he has to act two parts in that household. And it seems as if the Lord Jesus Christ looked down and saw your helplessness, and he proposed to be both father and mother to your sick soul. He comes in the strength of the one, and in the tenderness of the other, and He says: "As a father pitieth his children so I pity you. As one whom his mother comforteth so I will comfort you." O, do you not feel the hush of that Divine lullaby? Put down your tired head on the heaving bosom of that Divine compassion, and let Him put His arms around you, and say: "O, widowed soul, I will be thy husband and thy God. O, orphaned ones, I will be your protector. Don't cry. Don't cry." And then He will put His hand on your eyelids, and sweep that hand down on the cheek, wiping away all the tears of loneliness and bereavement. O, what a loving, tender, sympathetic God has come for us. I do not ask you, this morning, to lay hold of God; you may be too weak for that. I do not ask you even to pray; you may be too bewildered for that. I only ask you just to let go, and fall back into the arms of everlasting strength.

You and I will soon hear the click of the latch of the sepulchre. We want an Almighty Christ to go with us. I wonder if the friend of Lazarus will be about. Our friends will take us with strong arms, and lay us down in the dust; but they cannot bring us back again. I would

## BE SCARED WITH INFINITE FRIGHT

if I thought I should have to stay there for ever. But no. Christ will come with a glorious iconoclasm, and split and grind up the granite, and let us come out. O, the resurrection! What kind of a resurrection will it be?

A young woman was recently dying, without any hope, and she said to her mother in the closing hour: "Mother, I am going away from you, and I am so afraid." When you leave this world, when you bid farewell to those with whom you have been associated, and in the last great day, will you be afraid? If we have on that day Christ, the Omnipotent Saviour, on our side, all shall be well. If the resurrection comes upon a spring day, and all the flowers are blooming around our graves, how pleasant it would be to take up the brightest one of all those flowers and put in the scarred hand of Him who died for us; to gather up the most redolent of them all, and twist them into a garland for the brow that was struck with the thorns. On that day, when Jesus is surrounded by all the dominions of the saved, we will see what an awful libel it was when men said that Christ was only a man; and then you will declare with unparalleled emphasis: "Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen." O, would you not like to join in that "Amen," ye who believe this Christ is the eternal God? You shall have my permission. Let your "Amen" be the doxology of this whole assemblage! "Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen." [Thousands of voices: "Amen!"]

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## THE RELIGION OF GHOSTS.

"Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at En-dor. And Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night: and he said, I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and bring me him up, whom I shall name unto thee."—1 *Sam* xxviii. 7, 8.

**T**ROUBLE to the right of him, and trouble to the left of him, Saul knew not what to do. As a last resort, he concluded to seek out a spiritual medium, or a witch, or anything that you please to call her—at any rate, a woman who had communication with the spirits of the eternal world. It was a very difficult thing to do, for Saul had either slain all the witches, or compelled them to stop business. A servant, one day, said to King Saul: "I know of a spiritual medium down at the village of En-dor." "Do you?" said the king. Night falls. Saul, putting off his kingly robes, and putting on the dress of a plain citizen, with two servants, goes out to hunt up this spiritual medium. It was no easy thing for Saul to disguise himself, for the tallest people in the country only came up to his shoulder, and I think from the strength of the man and the way he bore himself, he must have been well-proportioned. It must have been a frightful thing to see a man walking along in the night eight or nine feet high. I suppose, as the people saw him pass, they said: "Who is that? He is as tall as the king"—having no idea that in such a plain dress there really was passing the king. Saul and his servants after awhile reach the village, and they say: "I wonder if this is the house;" and they look in and they see the haggard, weird, and shrivelled up spiritual medium sitting by the light, and on the table sculptured images, and divining rods, and poisonous herbs, and bottles, and vases. They say: "Yes, this must be the place." One loud rap brings the woman to the door, and as she stands there, holding the candle or lamp above



her head, and peering out into the darkness, she says: "Who is here?" The tall king informs her that he has come to have his fortune told. When she hears that she trembles, and almost drops the light, for she knows there is no chance for a fortune-teller or spiritual medium in all the land. But Saul having sworn that no harm shall come to her, she says: "Well, who shall I bring up from the dead?" Saul says—

**"BRING UP SAMUEL."**

That was the prophet who had died a little while before. I see her waving a wand, or stirring up some poisonous herbs in a cauldron, or hear muttering over some incantations, or stamping with her foot, as she cries out to the realm of the dead: "Samuel! Samuel!" Lo, the freezing horror! The floor of the tenement opens, and the grey hairs float up, and the forehead, the eyes, the lips, the shoulders, the arms, the feet, the entire body of dead Samuel, wrapped in sepulchral robe, appearing to the astonished group, who stagger back and hold fast, and catch their breath, and shiver with terror. The dead prophet, white and awful from the tomb, begins to move his ashen lips, and he glares upon King Saul, and cries out: "What did you bring me up for? Why did you break my long sleep? What do you mean, King Saul?" Saul, trying to compose and control himself, makes this stammering and affrighted utterance, as he says to the dead prophet: "The Lord is against me, and I have come to you for help. What shall I do?" The dead prophet stretched forth his finger to King Saul and said: "Die to-morrow! Come with me into the sepulchre. I am going now. Come, come with me!" And lo! the floor again opens, and the feet of the dead prophet disappear, and the arms, and the shoulders, and the forehead. The floor closes. Nothing is left in the room but Saul and the two servants, and the spiritual

medium, and the sculptured images, and the divining-rods, and the bottles, and the vases, and the poisonous herbs. O, that was an awful seance!

I learn first from this subject that *Spiritualism is a very old religion*. It is natural that people should want to know the origin and the history of a doctrine which is so widespread in all the villages, towns, and cities of the civilized world, getting new converts every day—a doctrine with which many of you are already tinged.

#### SPIRITUALISM IN AMERICA

was born in 1847, in Hydesville, Wayne County, New York, when one night there was a loud rap heard against the door of Michael Weekman; a rap a second time, a rap a third time; and all three times, when the door was opened, there was nothing found there, the knocking having been made seemingly by invisible knuckles. In that same house there was a young woman who had a cold hand passed over her face, and there being seemingly no arm attached to it, ghostly suspicions were excited. After awhile Mr. Fox and his family moved into that house, and then every night there was a banging at the door; and one night Mr. Fox said: "Are you a spirit?" Two raps, answering in the affirmative. "Are you an injured spirit?" Two raps, answering in the affirmative. And so they found out, as they say, that it was the ghost or spirit of a pedlar who had been murdered in that house, many years before, for his five hundred dollars. Whether the ghost of the dead pedlar had come there to collect his five hundred dollars, or his bones, I cannot say, not being a spiritualist; but there was a great racket at the door, so Mr. Weekman declared, and Mrs. Weekman, and Mr. Fox, and Mrs. Fox, and all the little Foxes. The excitement spread. There was a universal rumpus. The Hon. Judge Edmonds declared, in a book, that he had actually

seen a bell start from the top shelf of a closet, heard it ring over the people that were standing in the closet; then, swung by invisible hands, it rang over the people in the back parlour; and floated through the folding-doors to the front parlour, rung over the people there, and then dropped on the floor. N. P. Talmage, Senator of the United States, afterwards Governor of Wisconsin, had his head completely turned with spiritualistic demonstrations. A man, as he was passing along the road, said that he was lifted up bodily, and carried toward his home, through the air, at such great speed he could not count the posts on the fence as he passed; and as he had a hand-saw and a square in his hand, they beat, as he passed through the air, most delightful music. And the tables tipped, and the stools tilted, and the bedsteads raised, and the chairs upset, and it seemed as if the spirits everywhere had gone into the furniture business! Well, the people said: "We have got something new in this country; it is a new religion." O no, my friends. Thousands of years ago we find in our text

#### A SPIRITUALISTIC SEANCE.

Nothing in the spiritualistic circles of our day has been more strange, mysterious, and wonderful than things which have been seen in the past centuries of the world. In all the ages there have been necromancers, those who consult with the spirits of the departed; charmers, those who put their subjects in a mesmeric state; sorcerers, those who by taking poisonous drugs see everything, and hear everything, and tell everything; dreamers, people who in their sleeping moments can see the future world and hold consultation with spirits; astrologers, who could read a new dispensation in the stars; experts in palmistry, who can tell by the lines in the palm of your hand your origin and your history. From a cave on Mount Parnassus, we are told, there was an

exhalation that intoxicated the sheep and the goats that came anywhere near it, and a shepherd approaching it was thrown by that exhalation into an excitement in which he could foretell future events and hold consultation with the spiritual world. Yea, before the time of Christ the Brahmins went through all the table-moving, all the furniture excitement, which the spirits have exploited in our day; precisely the same thing, ever and over again, under the manipulations of the Brahmins. Now, do you say that Spiritualism is different from these? I answer, all these delusions I have mentioned belong to the same family. They are exhumations from the unseen world. What does God think of all these delusions? He thinks so severely of them that He never speaks of them but with livid thunders of indignation. He says: "I will be a swift witness against the sorcerer." He says: "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." And lest you might make some important distinction between Spiritualism and witchcraft, God says, in so many words: "There shall not be among you a consulter of familiar spirits, or wizard, or necromancer; for they that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord." And He says again: "The soul of those who seek after such as have familiar spirits, and who go whoring after them, I will set myself against them, and he shall be cut off from among his people." The Lord Almighty, in a score of passages, which I have not now time to quote, utters His indignation against all this great family of delusions. After that be a Spiritualist if you dare!

Still further: we learn from this text *how it is that people come to fall into Spiritualism*. Saul had

#### ENOUGH TROUBLE TO KILL TEN MEN.

He did not know where to go for relief. After awhile he resolved to go and see the witch of En-dor. He expected

that somehow she would afford him relief. It was his trouble that drove him there. And I have to tell you now that Spiritualism finds its victims in the troubled, the bankrupt, the sick, the bereft. You lose your watch, and you go to the fortune-teller to find where it is. You are sick with a strange disease, and you go to a fortune-teller doctor to find out by a lock of hair what is the matter with you. You lose a friend, you want the spiritual world opened, so that you may have communication with him. In a highly-wrought, nervous, and diseased state of mind, you go and put yourself in that communication. That is why I hate Spiritualism. It takes advantage of one in a moment of weakness, which may come upon us at any time. We lose a friend. The trial is keen, sharp, suffocating, almost maddening. If we could marshal a host, and storm the eternal world, and recapture our loved one, the host would soon be marshalled. The house is so lonely. The world is so dark. The separation is so insufferable.

But Spiritualism says: "We will open the future world, and your loved one can come back and talk to you." Though we may not hear his voice, we may hear the rap of his hand. So, clear the table. Sit down. Put your hands on the table. Be very quiet. Five minutes gone. Ten minutes. No motion of the table. No response from the future world. Twenty minutes. Thirty minutes. Nervous excitement all the time increasing. Forty minutes. The table shivers. Two raps from the future world. The letters of the alphabet are called over. The departed friend's name is John. At the pronunciation of the letter "J," two raps. At the pronunciation of the letter "O," two raps. At the pronunciation of the letter "H," two raps. At the pronunciation of the letter "N," two raps. There you have the whole name spelled out. J-o-h-n, John. Now, the spirit being present, you say:

"JOHN, ARE YOU HAPPY?"

Two raps give an affirmative answer. Pretty soon the hand of the medium begins to twitch and toss, and begins to write out, after paper and ink are furnished, a message from the eternal world. What is remarkable, the departed spirit, although it has been amid the illuminations of heaven, cannot spell as well as it used to! It has lost all grammatical accuracy, and cannot write as distinctly. I received a letter through a medium once. I sent it back. I said: "Just please to tell those ghosts they had better go to school and get improved in their orthography!" Now, just think of spirits, that the Bible represents as enthroned in glory, coming down to crawl under the table, and break crockery, and ring tea-bells before supper is ready, and rap the window shutter on a gusty night. Is there any consolation in such poor, miserable work compared with the thought that our departed Christian friends, got rid of pain and languishing, are in the radiant society of heaven, and that we shall join them there, not in a stifled and mysterious half-utterance, which makes the hair stand on end and the cold chills creep the back, but in an unhindered and illimitable delight.

"And none shall murmur or misdoubt,

When God's great sunrise finds us out."

Yes, my friends, Spiritualism comes to those who are in trouble and sweeps them into its delusions. Saul, in the midst of his disaster, went to the witch of En-dor. The vast majority of those who have gone to spiritual mediums have been sent there through their misfortunes.

I learn still farther from this subject, that *Spiritualism and necromancy are affairs of the darkness*. Why did not Saul go in the day? He was ashamed to go. Besides that, he knew that this spiritual medium, like all her successors, performed her exploits in the night. The Davenports, the Fowlers, the Foxes, the spiritual mediums of all ages, have

chosen the night or a darkened room. Why? The majority of their wonders have been swindles, and

DECEPTION PROSPERS BEST IN THE NIGHT.

Some of the performances of spiritual mediums are not to be ascribed to fraud, but to some occult law that after awhile may be demonstrated. But I believe that now nine hundred and ninety-nine out of every thousand achievements on the part of spiritual mediums are arrant and unmitigated humbug. The mysterious red letters that used to come out on the medium's arm were found to have been made by an iron pencil that went heavily over the flesh, not tearing it, but so disturbing the blood, that it came up in great round letters. The witnesses of the *seances* have locked the door, put the key in their pocket, arrested the operator, and found out, by searching the room, that hidden levers moved the tables. The sealed letters that were mysteriously read without opening, have been found to have been cut at the side, and then afterwards slyly put together with gum arabic; and the medium who, with a heavy blanket over his head, could read a book, has been found to have had a bottle of phosphoric oil, by the light of which anybody can read a book; and ventriloquism, and legerdemain, and sleight of hand, and optical delusion account for nearly everything. Deception being the main staple of Spiritualism, no wonder it chooses the darkness.

You have all seen strange and unaccountable things in the night. Almost every man has at some time had a touch of hallucination. Some time ago, after I had been over tempted to eat something indigestible before retiring at night, after retiring I saw the president of one of the prominent colleges astride the foot of the bed, while he demanded of me a loan of five cents! When I awakened I had no idea it was anything supernatural. And I have to advise you, if you

hear and see strange things at night, to stop eating hot mince pie and take a dose of bilious medicine. It is an outraged physical organism, and, not to deceive the very elect after sundown, does nearly all its work in the night. The witch of En-dor held her *seances* at night; so do all the witches. Away with this religion of spooks.

## SPIRITUALISM A CURSE TO ITS DISCIPLES.

Still further: I learn from my text that *Spiritualism is doom and death to its disciples*. King Saul thought that he would get help from the "medium;" but the first thing that he sees makes him swoon away, and no sooner is he resuscitated than he is told he must die. Spiritualism is doom and death to everyone that yields to it. It ruins the body. Look in upon an audience of spiritualists. Cadaverous. Weak. Nervous. Exhausted. Hands clammy and cold. Nothing prospers but long hair—soft marshes yielding rank grass. Spiritualism destroys the physical health. Its disciples are ever hearing startling news from the other world. Strange beings crossing the room in white. Table fidgetty, wanting to get its feet loose as if to dance. Voices sepulchral and ominous. Bewildered with raps. I never knew a confirmed spiritualist who had a healthy nervous system. It is incipient epilepsy and catalepsy. Destroy your nervous system and you might as well be dead. I have noticed that people who are hearing raps from the future world have but little strength left to bear the hard raps of this world. It is an awful thing to trifle with one's nervous system. It is so delicate—it is so far-reaching—its derangements are so terrible. Get the nervous system a jangle, and so far as your body and soul are concerned, the whole universe is a jangle. Better in our ignorance experiment with a chemist's retort that may smite us dead, or with an engineer's steam boiler that may blow us to atoms, than



experiment with the nervous system. A man can live with only one lung or with no eyes, and be happy, as men have been under such afflictions; but woe be to the man whose nerves are shattered. Spiritualism smites first of all, and mightily, against the nervous system, and so makes life miserable.

I indict Spiritualism also, because *it is a social and marital curse*. The worst deeds of licentiousness and the worst orgies of obscenity have been enacted under its patronage. The story is too vile for me to tell. I will not pollute my tongue nor your ears with the recital. Sometimes the civil law has been evoked to stop the outrage. Families innumerable have been broken up by it. It has pushed off hundreds of young women into a life of profligacy. It talks about "elective affinities," and "affinital relations," and "spiritual matches," and adopts the whole vocabulary of free-lovism. In one of its public journals it declares

**"MARRIAGE IS THE MONSTER CURSE OF CIVILISATION."**

"It is a source of debauchery and intemperance." If Spiritualism could have its full swing, it would turn this world into a pandemonium of carnality. It is an unclean, adulterous, damnable religion, and the sooner it drops into the hell from which it rose, the better both for earth and heaven. For the sake of man's honour and woman's purity, I say let the last vestige of it perish for ever. I wish I could gather up all the raps it has ever heard from spirits blest or damned, and gather them all on its own head in one thundering rap of annihilation!

I further indict Spiritualism for the fact that *it is the cause of much insanity*. There is not an asylum between Bangor and San Francisco which has not the torn and bleeding victims of this delusion. Go into any asylum, I care not where it is, and the presiding doctor, after you have asked him: "What

is the matter with that man?" will say: "Spiritualism demented him;" or "What is the matter with that woman?" he will say: "Spiritualism demented her." It has taken down some of the brightest intellects. It swept off into mental midnight judges, senators, governors, ministers of the Gospel, and one time came near capturing one of the presidents of the United States. At Flushing, near this city, a man became absorbed with it, forsook his family, took his only fifteen thousand dollars, surrendered them to a spiritual medium in New York, attempted three times to put an end to his own life, and then was incarcerated in the State Lunatic Asylum, where he is to-day a raving maniac. Put your hand in the hand of this witch of En-dor, and she will lead you to bottomless perdition, where she holds her everlasting *seance*. Many years ago the steamer *Atlantic* started from Europe for the United States. Getting mid-ocean the machinery broke, and she floundered around day after day, and week after week, and for a whole month after she was due people wondered, and finally gave her up. There was great anguish in the cities, for there were many who had friends aboard that vessel. Some of the women, in their distress, went to the spiritual mediums, and inquired as to the fate of that vessel. The mediums called up the spirits, and the rappings on the table indicated the steamship lost, with all on board.

#### WOMEN WENT RAVING MAD,

and were carried to the lunatic asylum. After awhile one day a gun was heard off Quarantine. The flags went up on the shipping, and the bells of the churches were rung. The boys ran through the streets, crying: "Extra! The *Atlantic* is safe!" There was the embracing as from the dead, when friends came again to friends; but some of those passengers went up to find their wives in the lunatic asylum, where

this cheat of infernal Spiritualism had put them. A man in Bellevue Hospital, dying from wounds made by his own hand, was asked why he tried to commit suicide, and he said: "The spirits told me to." Parents have strangled their children, and when asked why they did it, replied: "Spiritualism demanded it." It is the patronizer and forager for the mad-house. Judge Edmonds, in Broadway Tabernacle, New York, delivering a lecture in behalf of Spiritualism, admitted, in so many words: "There is a fascination about consultation with the spirits of the dead that has a tendency to lead people off from their right judgment, and to instil into them a fanaticism that is revolting to the natural mind."

It not only ruins its disciples, but it ruins the mediums also, only give it time. The Gaderean swine, on the banks of the Lake of Galilee, no sooner became spiritual mediums than down they went, in an avalanche of pork, to the consternation of all the herdsmen. The office of a medium is bad for a man, bad for a woman, bad for a beast.

I bring against this delusion a more fearful indictment: *it ruins the soul immortal*. First, it makes a man a quarter of an infidel; then it makes him half an infidel; then it makes him whole infidel. The whole system, as I conceive it, is founded on the insufficiency of the Word of God as a revelation. God says the Bible is enough for you to know about the future world. You say it is not enough, and there is where you and the Lord differ. You clear the table, you shove aside the Bible, you put your hand on the table, and say: "Now let spirits of the future world come and tell me something the Bible has not told me." And although the Scriptures say: "Add thou not unto His words, lest He reprove thee, and thou be found a liar," you risk it, and say: "Come back, spirit of my departed father; come back, spirit of my departed mother, of my companions, of

my little child, and tell me some things I don't know about you and about the unseen world." If God is ever slapped square in the face, it is when a spiritual medium puts down her hand on the table, invoking spirits departed to make a revelation. God has told you all you ought to know, and how dare you be prying into that which is none of your business? You cannot keep the Bible in one hand and Spiritualism in the other. One or the other will slip out of your grasp, depend upon it.

#### SPIRITUALISM IS ADVERSE TO THE BIBLE

in the fact that it has in these last days called from the future world Christian men to testify against Christianity. Its mediums call back Lorenzo Dow, the celebrated evangelist, and Lorenzo Dow testifies that Christians are idolators. Spiritualism calls back Tom Payne, and he testifies that he is stopping in the same house in heaven with John Bunyan. They call back John Wesley, and he testifies against the Christian religion which he all his life gloriously preached. Andrew Jackson Davis, the greatest of all the spiritualists, comes to the front and declares that the New Testament is but "the dismal echo of a barbaric age," and the Bible only "one of the pen and ink relics of Christianity." They attempt to substitute the writings of Swedenborg, and Andrew Jackson Davis, and other religious balderdash, in the place of this old Bible. I have in my house a book which was used in this very city in the public service of spiritualists. It is well worn with much service. I open that book, and it says: "What is our baptism? Answer: Frequent ablutions of water. What is our inspiration? Plenty of fresh air and sunlight. What is our prayer? Abundant physical exercise. What is our love-feast? A clear conscience and sound sleep." And I find from the same book that the chief item in their public

worship is gymnastic exercise, and that whenever they want to rouse up their souls to a very high pitch of devotion they sing page sixty-five: "The night has gathered up her moonlit fringes;" or page sixteen: "Come to the woods, heigho!" You say you are not such a fool as that; but you will be if you keep on in the track you have started.

"But," says some one, "wouldn't it be of advantage to hear from the future world? Don't you think it would strengthen Christians? There are a great many Materialists who do not believe there are souls; but if spirits from the future world should knock and talk over to us, they would be persuaded." To that I answer, in the ringing words of the Son of God: "If they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

Now I believe, under God, that this sermon will save many from disease, insanity, and perdition. I believe these are the days of which the Apostle spake when he said: "In the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits." I think my audience, as well as other audiences in this day, need to have reiterated in their hearing the passages I quoted some minutes ago: "There shall not be among you a consulter of familiar spirits, or wizard, or necromancer; for they that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord;" and "The soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, I will set myself against them, and they shall be cut off from their people."

But I invite you this morning to

#### A CHRISTIAN SEANCE,

a noonday seance. This congregation is only one great family. Here is the church table. Come around the church table, take your seats for this great Christian seance, put your Bible on the table, put your hands on the top of the Bible, and then listen, and hear if there are any voices coming

from the eternal world. I think there are. Listen! "Secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but things that are revealed belong to us and to our children." Surely that is a voice from the spirit-world! But before you rise from this Christian seance, I want you to promise me you will be satisfied with the Divine revelation until the light of the eternal throne breaks upon your vision. Do not go after the witch of En-dor. Do not sit down at table-rappings, either in sport or in dead earnest. Have your tables so well made and their legs so even, that they will not tip and rattle. If the table must move, let it be under the offices of industrious housewifery. Teach your children there are no ghosts to be seen or heard in this world save those which walk on two feet or four, human or bestial. Remember that Spiritualism at the best is a useless thing; for if it tells what the Bible reveals it is a superfluity, and if it tells what the Bible does not reveal, it is a lie. Instead of going out to get other people to tell your fortune, tell your own fortune by putting your trust in God and doing the best you can. I will tell your fortune: "All things work together for good to them who love God." Insult not your departed friends by asking them to come down and scrabble under an extension-table. Remember that there is only one Spirit whose dictation you have a right to invoke, and that is the holy, blessed, and omnipotent Spirit of God. Hark! He is rapping now, not on a table or the floor, but rapping on the door of your heart, and every rap is an invitation to Christ and a warning of judgment to come. O, grieve Him not away. Quench Him not. He has been all around you this morning. He was all around you last night. He has been around you all your lives. Hark! There comes a voice dropping through the roof, breaking through the window, filling all this house with tender and overmastering intonation, saying: "My spirit shall not always strive."

## THE DYING NEED OF THE CHURCH.

' Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me : and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in ; behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts."—*Malachi* iii. 1.

SOMETIMES, a minister's subject is suggested by his artistic tastes ; sometimes, by the occurrences of the previous week ; sometimes, by a hearer who desires some particular religious subject discussed. My subject comes in no such way. It drops straight from God into my heart. Give me your prayerful and intense listening.

I want to show this morning, so far as God may help me, that the dying need of the Church universal is a mighty awakening. The ox in the pasture field looks around, and perhaps comes to the conclusion that all the world is a clover field. So we, standing in the midst of luxuriant religious advantages, might think perhaps that the earth is covered with the knowledge of God ; but so far from that, if this platform were the world, so much of it as I now cover with my right foot would represent all that is conquered for Emanuel. Or if this whole Tabernacle were the world, then one pew would represent so much of it as the grace of God has already conquered. O there is need of a radical change. Something must be done, and I shall show this morning that the great—aye, as I have already said, the dying—need of the Church is a great awakening.

I learn this need, in the first place, from the *coldness in the majority of Church members*. If a religious society have a thousand members, eight hundred of them are sound asleep. If it have five hundred members, four hundred are lethargic. If the Christians can rally—that is, the professed Christians—for communion day, and succeed in not dropping the wine cup, how many of them are satisfied ? If it be a choice between Christ and the world,

the world has it. You know it as well as I do. If a religious meeting be on a certain night, and on that same night there be an extraordinary operatic entertainment, or a social gathering, or a literary club, or a political meeting, or a Free Mason Society, or an Odd Fellows association, you know which they go to. God there fairly demonstrating that while such professed Christians pretend to be on His side, they are really on the other side ; for there is a point-blank issue between Christ and the world, and the world has it. You know very well whether you are a professed Christian or not ; you know very well that the dividing line between the Church and the world to-day is—like the equator, or the arctic or antarctic circle—an imaginary line, and that there are men and women sworn of God who sit discussing infinitesimal questions: "Shall we dance? Shall we play cards? Shall we go to the theatre? Shall we attend the opera?" while there are five hundred millions of the race going down to darkness unwarned. These sham Christians will go on, occasionally taking a little religion with the tipend of their fingers, sauntering on lazily towards the bar of Christ, until they come in front of God's swift revolving mill, and find themselves to be "the chaff which the wind driveth away." O

#### HOW MUCH DEAD WOOD WE HAVE

in all our Churches. The Day of Judgment will make a fearful thinning out among professed Christians. I suppose it will be found on that day that there are hundreds of thousands of men who have their names on the Church books who really made religion a second-rate or third-rate thing ; living for themselves, unmindful of God and the salvation of the race, and then tumbling over the embankment where Judas went, and Achan went, and where all those shall go who do not make religion the primordial



thing—the first and the last matter of the soul. O worldly professor of religion, vacillating professor, idle professor, tremble before God to-day. Do you not know that if you die as you are, all the communion-tables at which you have ever sat will lift up hands of blood, crying for your condemnation? And your neglected Bible, and your prayerless pillow, will cry: “Go down! go down! You pretended to have religion, but you had none. Out of the seven days of the week, you gave not five hours to Christ. You broke your sacramental oath. Go down! go down!” And the fieriest and mightiest thunderbolt of God’s indignation that is ever forged will smite you into darkness. O I would rather be the man, in the last day, who has never seen a church, than you who professed to be so much, and to do so much, and yet did nothing. You shall perish in the way when God’s wrath is kindled but a little. O worldly professor of religion—and there are hundreds of them here to-day, I am aiming at the mark—if you could to-day realize your true condition, and your true position before God, you would bite your lip until the blood came; you would wring your hands until the bones cracked; you would utter a cry that would send this whole audience to their feet with a horror. May God wake you up, worldly professor of religion, before you wake up in the barred and flaming dungeons of a destroyed eternity. When you look abroad and see lethargy among the professors of religion almost all the world over, do you not see that there is a need that the bugles, and the cymbals, and the drums, and the trumpets of all earth and heaven call upon the Church to wake up all those dormant professors of religion? “Awake, thou that sleepest; awake, and Christ shall give thee life.”

Still further: I see a need for a great awakening in the fact that *those of us who preach the Gospel have so little enthusiasm and zeal compared with what we ought to have.* Now

you see the gun kicks. I say, we who preach the Gospel have so little zeal and enthusiasm for Christ compared with what we ought to have. O, it is a tremendous thing to stand before an audience on Sabbath days, realizing the fact that the majority of them will believe what you say about God, and the soul, and the great future. Suppose a man asked of you the road to a certain place, and you carelessly and falsely told him, and afterwards you heard that through lack of right direction that man was lost on the mountains, fell over the rocks, and lost his life. You could not forgive yourself. You would say: "I wish I had taken more time with that man. I wish I had given him such specific directions that he would not have been lost. How sorry I feel about it." But O, to misdirect the eternal interests of a large congregation! How cold and stolid we stand in our pulpits, actually sometimes priding ourselves on our deliberation, when we have no right to be cold, and ought to be almost frantic with the perils that threaten our hearers. So much so, that some of us give no warning at all, and we stand Sabbath after Sabbath, talking about "human development," and

#### WE PAT MEN ON THE BACK,

and we please them, and we hide eternal retribution, and we sing them all down through the rapids to the last plunge. Or, as the poet has it:—

"Smooth down the stubborn text to ears polite,  
And snugly keep damnation out of sight!"

O, my brethren in the ministry—for I see them always in the audience—my brethren in the ministry, we cannot afford to do that way. If you prophesy good things, smooth things, to your people, without regard to their character, what chance will there be for you in the day

when you meet them at the bar of God? You had better stand clear of them then. They will tear you to pieces. They will say: "I heard you preach five hundred times, and I admired your philosophic disquisition, and your graceful gestures, and your nicely moulded sentences, curvilinear and stelliform, and I thought you were the prince of proprieties; but you didn't help me prepare for this day. Cursed be your rhetoric, cursed be your art. I am going down, and I'll take you with me. It is your fault; witness all the hosts of heaven and all the hosts of darkness, it is your fault, sir;" and the chorus will come up from all worlds: "His fault! his fault!" All of us who preach this Gospel need to speak as though the pulpit quaked with the tramp of eternal realities, as though beneath us were the bursting graves of the resurrection morn, as though rising above us, tier above tier, were the myriads of heaven looking down, ready to applaud our fidelity, or hiss at our stolidity, while coming through the Sabbath air were the long, deep, harrowing groan of the dying nations that are never dead. May God with a torch from heaven set all the pulpits of England and Scotland, and Ireland, and the United States on fire. As for myself, standing here in this presence this morning, I feel as if I had never begun to preach. If God will forgive me for the past, I will do better for the future.

" 'Tis not a cause of small import  
The pastor's care demands;  
But what might fill an angel's heart,  
It filled a Saviour's hands.

"They watch for souls for which the Lord  
Did heavenly bliss forego;  
For souls that must for ever live  
In raptures or in woe."

Still further: I see a need for a great awakening in the fact that *the kingdom of God is making such slow progress.* I

simply state a fact when I say that in many places the Church is surrendering and the world is conquering. Where there is one man brought into the kingdom of God through Christian instrumentality, there are ten men dragged down by dissipations. Fifty grog shops built to one Church established. Literary journals in different parts of the country filled with scum, and dandruff, and slag, controlled by the very scullions of society, depraving everything they put their hands on. Three hundred and ten newspapers, journals, and magazines in New York, and more than two hundred of them depraving to the public taste, if not positively inimical to our holy Christianity. Look abroad and see the surrender, even on the part of those that pretend to be Christian Churches, to Spiritualism and Humanitarianism, and all the forms of devilism. If a man stand in his pulpit and say that unless you be born again you will be lost, do not the tight kid gloves of the Christian, diamonds bursting through, go up to their foreheads in humiliation and shame? It is not elegant. A mighty host in the Christian Church, positively professing Christianity, do not believe in the Bible, out and out, in and in, from the first word of the first verse of the first chapter of the book of Genesis, down to the last word of the last verse of the last chapter of the book of Revelation. And when, a few Sabbaths ago, I stood in this pulpit and said: "I fear that some of this audience will be lost for the rejection of Christ," why there were four or five of the daily papers that threw up their hands in surprise at it. O, we have magnificent Church machinery in this country: we have sixty thousand American ministers, we have costly music, we have great Sunday-schools; and yet I give you the appalling statistics that in the last twenty-five years, laying aside last year, the statistics of which I have not yet seen—within the last twenty-five years the Churches of God in this country have averaged

## LESS THAN TWO CONVERSIONS A YEAR

each. There has been an average of four or five deaths in the Churches. How soon, at that rate, will this world be brought to God? We gain two; we lose four. Eternal God, what will this come to? I tell you plainly that while here and there a regiment of the Christian soldiery is advancing, the Church is falling back for the most part, and falling back, and falling back, and if you do not come to complete rout—aye, to ghastly Bull Run defeat—it will be because some individual Churches hurl themselves to the front, and ministers of Christ, trampling on the favour of this world and sacrificing everything, shall snatch up the torn and shattered banner of Emanuel, and rush ahead, crying: “On! on! This is no time to run; this is the time to advance.”

I see, still further, the need of a great awakening in the *multitudinous going down of unforgiven souls*. Since many of you came on the stage of action, a whole generation has gone into the gates of eternity. Your opportunity to act upon them is gone. They have disappeared from the churches, from the stores, the shops, the streets, from the homes. Many of them are now—what is the use of my hiding the fact and being the coward in regard to it—no, I will tell you just as it is—many of them going out of this world without one item of preparation. Their souls dropped flat into the lost world. That is, if the Bible is true, and I am supposing it is. You, O Christian man, had an opportunity of meeting them. You did meet them. You talked with them on other subjects. You had an opportunity of saying the saving word, and you did not say that saving word. Just think of that! O, where is the fountain where, with sleeve rolled up, we may wash our hands from the blood of souls? There is no need, perhaps, of mourning over that just now. We cannot change it. They are dead and

they are destroyed—those who believed not in Christ—they are destroyed. The only question is, whether, as Christian men and women, we can now interrupt the other procession that is marching down, and will, after awhile, if unarrested by God's grace, fall off. There are going out from our stores hundreds of thousands of clerks; going out from our factories hundreds of thousands of operatives; there are going out of our colleges hundreds of thousands of students; there are going out of our fields hundreds of thousands of husbandmen, to join the ranks of death. They are fighting their way down. They storm and take every impediment put in their way, and who will throw himself in the way of this stampede of dying men and women—who, crying: "Halt, halt!" If there be eight hundred millions of the race unblessed, and the Churches average two souls saved in a year, will you let this generation go down, and the next, and the next?

I need not rehearse in this presence what God has done for us as an individual Church. You have heard with your own ears the cries for mercy, and you have seen the raining tears of repentance for the last eighteen months. I do not believe that there is any Church in this land that owes God more of gratitude than this Church owes Him to-day. But who can count the number of our permanent congregation who are not Christians? And what about the eighty or one hundred thousand souls of strangers that, during the last year, floated in and out our assemblages; and what about the eternity of those who are now and will be this year in our permanent congregation; and the eighty or one hundred thousand souls that during this coming twelve months will float in and out our services; and the vaster audience to whom this Church preaches week by week on both sides of the sea through the Christian printing-press? If John Livingston in a small church in one service had five hundred souls

brought to God, why may you not, in a larger church, have three thousand souls as easily as he had five hundred? It is the same Gospel. John Livingston did not save them. It is the same Holy Ghost. It is the same great Jehovah. If John Knox could put the lever of prayer under Scotland until he moved it from end to end, shall you not by the lever of importunate petition move this whole city of Brooklyn, from the East River to Utrecht, and from New Utrecht to Hunter's Point? God can do, and He will do it, if you mightily and relentlessly ask Him to do it. O, fling body, mind, and soul, and eternal destiny into this one thing. Swing out and enlarge in your prayerful expectations. You asked God for hundreds of souls, and He gave them to you, and I sometimes heard you ask for thousands; and I am very certain that if you had asked for thousands with the same faith that you asked for hundreds, God would have given you thousands. There is no need, in this presence, of bringing the old stereotyped illustrations of the fact that God hears prayer, nor telling you about Hezekiah's restored health, and about Elijah and the great rain, and about the *post mortem* examination of the apostle James, which found that his knees had become callous by much praying; nor of Richard Baxter, who stained the walls of his study with the breath of prayer; nor of John Welch and the midnight plaid; nor of George Whitefield flat on his face before God. No need of my telling you these things. I turn in on your own consciousness, and I review the memory of that time when

YOUR OWN SOUL WAS SINKING,

and God heard your cry; and of that time when your child was dying, and God heard your petition; and of that time when your fortune failed, and God set in your empty pantry the cruse of oil, and the measure of meal. I want no illus-

tration at all. I just take a ladder with three rungs, and set it down at your feet. On that you can mount up, and, if you will look off, see the salvation of ten thousand of your fellow citizens. "Ask, and it shall be given you. Seek, and ye shall find." Put your right foot on the lower rung of that ladder, and your left on the second rung of it, and that will bring your right foot on the top rung. Then hold fast, and look out and see the wave of the Divine blessing dashing higher than the top-gallants of your ship. O yes, God is ready to hear. I think the Lord put on us, as a Church, a great responsibility. We set our hands to the work of evangelization. We are doing nothing else here. We do not want to do anything else here, but this work of evangelization. That is, we want to bring men and women to Christ, and bring them now. I do not know how you feel, my brethren, but my heart is breaking with a longing that I have for the redemption of this people. If God does not give me my prayer, I cannot endure it. I offer myself, I offer my life, to this work. Take it, O Lord Jesus, and slay me if that be best. Whether by my life, or by my death, may a great multitude of souls here be borne to God. If from the mound of my grave more can step into the kingdom of God than through my life, let me now lie down to the last sleep. But only let the people be saved. Lord Jesus, it is sweet to live for Thee; methinks it would be sweet to die for Thee. If in the Napoleonic wars six millions fell; if in the wars of the Roman Empire one hundred and eighty millions fell, shall there not be a great many in our day who are willing to sacrifice, not only worldly ambition, but sacrifice all for Christ?

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## A VIEW FROM A PALACE WINDOW.

"Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher ; all is vanity."—*Ecc.* xii. 8.

WHEN a book is placed in your hands, the first question you ask is : " Who wrote it ? " Not all the political astuteness, and classic grace, and unparalleled satire of Junius's Letters can satisfy you, because you do not know who Junius was—whether John Horne Tooke, or Bishop Butler, or Edmund Burke. Mightier than a book always is the man who wrote the book.

Now, who is the author of this text ? King Solomon. It seemed as if the world exhausted itself on that man. It wove its brightest flowers into his garland. It set its richest gems in his coronet. It pressed the rarest wine to his lip. It robed him in the purest purple and embroidery. It cheered him with the sweetest music in that land of harps. It greeted him with the gladdest laughter that ever leaped from mirth's lip. It sprinkled his cheek with spray from the brightest fountains. Royalty had no dominion, wealth no luxury, gold no glitter, flowers no sweetness, song no melody, light no radiance, upholstery no gorgeousness, waters no gleam, birds no plumage, prancing coursers no metal, architecture no grandeur, but it was all his. Across the thick grass of the lawn, fragrant with tufts of camphire from En-gedi, fell the long shadows of trees brought from distant forests. Fish-pools, fed by artificial channels that brought the streams from hills far away, were perpetually ruffled with fins, and golden scales shot from water cave to water cave with endless dive and swirl, attracting the gaze of foreign potentates. Birds that had been brought from foreign aviary glanced and fluttered among the foliage, and called to their mates far beyond the sea. From the royal stables there came up the neighing of twelve thousand horses, standing in blankets of Tyrian purple, chewing their

bits over troughs of gold, waiting for the king's order to be brought out in front of the palace, when the official dignitaries would leap into the saddle for some grand parade, or, harnessed to some of the fourteen hundred chariots of the king, the fiery chargers, with flaunting mane and throbbing nostril, would make the earth jar with the tramp of hoofs and the thunder of wheels. While within and without the palace you could not think of a single luxury that could be added, or of a single splendour that could be kindled, down on the banks of the sea the dry docks of Ezion-geber rang with the hammers of the shipwrights who were constructing larger vessels for a still wider commerce, for all lands and climes were to be robbed to make up Solomon's glory. No rest till his keels shall cut every sea, his axemen hew every forest, his archers strike every rare wing, his fishermen whip every stream, his merchants trade in every bazaar, his name be honoured by every tribe; and royalty shall have no dominion, wealth no luxury, gold no glitter, song no melody, light no radiance, waters no gleam, birds no plumage, prancing coursers no metal, upholstery no gorgeousness, architecture no grandeur,

BUT IT WAS ALL HIS.

"Well," you say, "if there is any man happy, he ought to be." But I hear him coming out through the palace, and see his robes actually encrusted with jewels, as he stands in the front and looks out upon the vast domain. What does he say? King Solomon, great is your dominion, great is your honour, great is your joy? No. While standing there amid all that splendour, the tears start, and his heart breaks, and he exclaims: "Vanity of vanities; all is vanity." What! Solomon not happy yet? No, not happy.

I learn from this subject, in the first place, that *official position will never give solace to a man's soul*. I know there

have been very happy men in high positions, such as Wilberforce, as Theodore Frelinghuysen, as Governor Briggs, as Prince Albert. But the joy came not from their elevated position; it came from the Lord God whom they tried to serve. This man Solomon was king thirty-five years. All the pleasure that comes from palatial residence, from the flattery of foreign diplomatists, from universal sycophancy, gathered around him. For a long while his throne stood firm and the people were loyal, and yet hear his awful sigh of disheartenment in the words of my text. How many people in all ages have made the same experiment with the same failure! How often you see people who think: "If I could only get into this or that position—if I could be a mayor, or a governor, or a senator, or a president, I should be perfectly happy!" And they have gone on, climbing from one position to another, never finding the solace they anticipated. Ask the men who have gone through the political life of the last forty years, in their old days, what they think of the honours of this world, and they will tell you, "Ashes! ashes!" An old man told me some time ago that he called at the White House just before the expiration of the second term of President Jackson. He sent a message in; the president came not. He sent a second time, and a third time. After awhile the president came out in great indignation, and said: "Gentlemen, people envy me in this White House, and they long to get here; but I tell you, at the end of the second term, I am glad to get out of it, for it is a perfect hell." The honours and the emoluments of this world bring so many cares with them that they bring also torture and disquietude. Pharaoh sat on one of the highest earthly eminences, yet he is miserable because there are some people in his realm that do not want any longer to make bricks. The head of Edward I. aches under his crown because the people will not pay the taxes, and Llewellyn,

Prince of Wales, will not do him homage, and Wallace will be a hero. Frederick William III., of Prussia, is miserable because France wants to take the Prussian provinces. The world is not large enough for Louis XIV. and William III. The ghastliest suffering, the most shrivelling fear, the most rending jealousies, the most gigantic disquietude, has walked amid obsequious courtiers, and been clothed in royal apparel, and sat on judgment seats of power.

#### HONOUR AND TRUTH AND JUSTICE

cannot go so high up in authority as to be beyond the range of human assault. The pure and the good in all ages have been execrated by the mob who cry out: "Not this man, but Barabbas. Now, Barabbas was a robber." By patriotic devotion, by honesty, by Christian principle, I would have you, my hearers, seek for the favour and the confidence of your fellow-men; but do not look upon some high position in society as though that were always sunshine. The mountains of earthly honour are like the mountains of Switzerland, covered with perpetual ice and snow. Having obtained the confidence and the love of your associates, be content with such things as you have. You brought nothing into the world, and it is very certain you can carry nothing out. Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils. There is an honour that is worth possessing, but it is an honour that comes from God. This day rise up and take it. Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God. Who aspires not for that royalty? Come now and be kings and priests unto God and the Lamb for ever.

Still further: I learn from my subject that *worldly wealth cannot satisfy the soul's longing*. The more money a man has, the better, if he gets it honestly and uses it lawfully. The whole teaching of the Word of God has a tendency to create

those kinds of habits and that kind of mental acumen which leads on to riches. A man who talks against wealth as though it were a bad thing, is either a knave or a fool, not meaning what he says, or ignorant of the glorious uses to which money can be put. But the man who builds his soul's happiness on earthly accumulation is not at all wise, to put it in the faintest shape. To say that Solomon was a millionaire gives but a very imperfect idea of the property he inherited from David his father. He had at his command gold to the value of six hundred and eighty million pounds, and he had silver to the value of one billion, twenty-nine million, three hundred and seventy-seven pounds sterling. The Queen of Sheba made him a nice little present of seven hundred and twenty thousand pounds, and Hiram made him a present of the same amount. If he had lost the value of a whole realm out of his pocket, it would have hardly been worth his while to stoop down and pick it up; and yet, with all that affluence, he writes the words of my text: "Vanity of vanities; all is vanity." Alas! if that man could not find in all his worldly possessions

ENOUGH TO SATISFY HIS IMMORTAL SOUL,

no amount that you and I will ever gather by the sweat of our brow, or by the strength of our arm, will make us happy. I have been amused to hear people when they start in life say at what point in life they will be contented with worldly possessions. One man says: "I want to get twenty thousand dollars, and I will be satisfied." Another: "I want to get fifty or a hundred thousand, or a million, and then I will be satisfied. Then I will say to my soul: 'Now, just look at that block of storehouses. Just look at those Government securities. Just look at those bonds and mortgages. Just look what lucrative investments you have. Now my soul, take thine ease; eat, drink, and be merry!'" Thou

fool! If you are not happy now with the smaller possessions, you will never be with the larger possessions. If with decent and comely apparel you are not grateful to God, you would be ungrateful if you had a prince's wardrobe crowded till the hinges burst. If you sat this morning at your table, the fare was so poor you complained, you would not be satisfied though you sat down to partridge and pine-apple. If you are not contented with an income to support comfortably your household, you would not be contented though your income rolled in on you fifty or a hundred thousand dollars a year. It is not what we get, it is what we *are*, that makes us happy or miserable. If that is not so, how do you account for the fact that many of those who fare sumptuously every day are waspish and dissatisfied, and overbearing, and foreboding, and cranky, and uncompromising; with a countenance in which wrath always lowers, and a lip which scorn curls; while many a time in the summer even-tide you see a labouring man going home in his shirt sleeves, with a pail on his arm and a pickaxe over his shoulder, his face bright with smiles, and his heart with hope, and the night of his toil bright with flaming auroras? It is an illustration and proof of the fact that it is not outward condition that makes a man happy. A man came to Rothschild, the great London banker, and said: "You must be a thoroughly happy man." He said: "Happy? Me happy? Happy when, just as I am going to dine, a man sends me a note, saying: 'If you don't send me five hundred pounds before to-morrow night, I will blow your brains out.' Me happy?"

O, I wish this morning I could, by the power of the Lord Almighty, break the infatuation of those men who are neglecting the present sources of satisfaction, hoping that there is to be something in the future for them of a worldly nature that will satisfy their souls. The heart right, all is right.

The heart wrong, all is wrong. But I ask you to higher riches: to crowns that never fade, to investments that always declare dividends. Come up this day and get it,—the riches of God's pardon, the riches of God's mercy, the riches of God's peace. Blessed are all they who put their trust in Him.

I go still further, and learn from this subject that *learning and science cannot satisfy the soul*. You know that Solomon was one of the largest contributors to the literature of his day. He wrote one thousand and five songs.

HE WROTE THREE THOUSAND PROVERBS.

He wrote about almost everything. The Bible says distinctly he wrote about plants, from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop that groweth out of the walls; and about birds, and beasts, and fishes. No doubt he put off his royal robes, and put on hunter's trapping, and went out with his arrows to bring down the rarest specimens of birds; and then with his fishing apparatus he went down to the stream to bring up the denizens of the deep, and plunged into the forest, and found the rarest specimens of flowers; and then he came back to his study and wrote books about zoology, the science of animals; about ichthyology, the science of fishes; about ornithology, the science of birds; about botany, the science of plants. Yet, notwithstanding all his achievements he cries out in my text: "Vanity of vanities; all is vanity." Have you ever seen a man try to make learning and science his God? Did you ever know such a fearful autobiography as that of John Stuart Mill, a man who prided himself on his philosophy, and had a wonderful strength of intellect; yet now, after his death, his autobiography goes forth to the world showing that his whole life was a gigantic wretchedness. We have seen men go out with mineralogist's hammer, and geologist's pry, and

botanist's knife, and ornithologist's gun, and storm the kingdom of nature in her barred castles of cave, and grove, and forest; and if there is any heaven on earth, it is that. With your eyes prepared for all beautiful sights, and your ears for all sweet sounds, and your soul for all great thoughts, if you go forth in the place where God breathes in the aroma of flowers, and talks in the wind's rustling, and sings in the rear of forest and mountain cataract, then you know why Linnæus spent his life amid plants, and Cuvier found intelligent converse among beasts, and Werner grew exhilarant among minerals, and Audubon revelled among birds, and Agassiz found untravelled worlds of thought in a fish. But every man who has testified, after trying the learning and science of the world for a solace, testified that it is an insufficient portion. The philosopher has often wept in astronomer's observatory, and chemist's laboratory, and botanist's herbarium. There are times when the soul dives deeper than the fish, and soars higher than the bird, and though it may be enraptured with the beauties of the natural world, it will long after trees of life that never wither, and fountains that never dry up, and stars that shall shine after the glories of our earthly nights have gone out for ever. O, what discontents, what jealousies, what uncontrollable hate has sprung up among those who depended upon their literary success. How often have writers, with their pens plunged into the hearts of their rivals—pens sharper than cimeters,

## STRIKING DEEPER THAN BAYONETS.

Voltair hated Rousseau. Charles Lamb could not endure Coleridge. Waller warred against Cowley. The hatred of Plato and Xenophon is as immortal as their works. Corneille had an utter contempt for Racine. Have you ever been in Westminster Abbey? In the "Poet's Corner," in



Westminster Abbey, sleep Drayton the poet, and a little way off, Goldie, who said the former was not a poet. There sleep Dryden, and a little way off, poor Shadwell, who pursued him with fiend's fury. There is Pope, and a little way off is John Dennis, his implacable enemy. They never before came so near together without quarrelling! Byron had all that genius could give a man, and that sympathy with nature could give a man, and that literary applause could give a man, and yet a later poet most graphically describes both his genius and his grief by saying :

The nations gazed, and wondered much, and praised :  
 Critics before him fell in humble plight,  
 Confounded fell : and made debasing signs  
 To catch his eye ; and stretched, and swelled themselves  
 To bursting nigh, to utter bulky words  
 Of admiration vast : and many, too—  
 Many that aimed to imitate his flight,  
 With weaker wing—unearthly fluttering made,  
 And gave abundant sport to after days.

Great man ! the nations gazed, and wondered much,  
 And praised : and many called his evil good.  
 Wits wrote in favour of his wickedness :  
 And kings to do him honour took delight,  
 Thus full of titles, flattery, honour, fame :  
 Beyond desire, beyond ambition full,  
 He died.—He died of what ? Of wretchedness.  
 Drank every cup of joy, heard every trump  
 Of fame ; drank early, deeply drank ; drank draughts  
 That common millions might have quenched—then died  
 Of thirst, because there was no more to drink.

I come to learn one more lesson from my subject, and that is *that there is no comfort in the life of a voluptuary*. I dare not draw aside the curtain that hides the excesses into which Solomon's dissoluteness plunged him. Though he waved a sceptre over others, there arose in his own soul a tyrant that mastered him. With a mandate that none dare disobey, he

laid the whole land under tribute to his iniquity. Delilah sheared the locks of that Samson. From that princely seraglio there went forth a ruinous blight on the whole nation's chastity; but after awhile remorse, with feet of fire, leaped upon his soul, and with body exhausted, and loathsome, and dropping apart with putrefaction, he staggers out from the hell of his own iniquity to give warning to others. O how many have ventured out on that wild sea of sensuality, driven by fierce winds of passion, hurled against rocks, swallowed in the whirl of hell's maelstrom; that was the last of them. No! that was not the last of them. Everlastingly ruined, with their passions unsubdued and burning on the soul fiercer than unquenchable fire, they shall writhe in a torture that shall make the cheek of darkness pale, and utter a blasphemy that shall shock devils damned. O how many young men have gone on that path of sin because it seemed blooming with tropical splendour, and the sky was bright, and the air was balm, and from the castles that stood on the shore of glittering seas there came ringing up laughter as merry as the waves that dashed on the crags beneath. By some infernal spell their eye was blinded and their ear was stopped, or they would have heard the clank of chains and the howl of woe, and across their vision would have passed spectres of the dead, with shrouds gathered up about faces blistered with pain, and eyes starting from their sockets in agony. But, alas! they saw it not, they heard it not, until from the slippery places the long, lean, skeleton hands of despair reached up and snatched them down, destroyed without despair! Has this sorcerer cast its eye on you? O young man, have you been once and again to the places where the pure never go? Have you turned your back upon a mother's prayer and a sister's love, and while I speak does your conscience begin to toll dismally the burial of your purity and honour?

## PUT BACK NOW OR NEVER.

Put back! That shadow that falls upon your soul is from no passing cloud, but from a night deep, starless, eternal. God's eye watcheth thy footsteps. A little further on and no tears can wash out thy sin, and no prayer will bring a pardon. Put back now or never! I tear off the garlands which hide this death's head, and hold before you to-day the reeking skull of sinful pleasure. Nations have gone down under this sin. Exhumed cities on broken pillars, and on temple walls have preserved in infamous sculpture the memory of scenes before which the antiquarian turns his head and asks if there be a God where so long has slept His vengeance. The world still trembles under the weight of this behemoth of iniquity, and from the myriad graves in which it holds the scarred carcasses of the slain lifts up its hands, crying: "How long, O Lord, how long?" From Christian circles, from the very altars of God, the ranks of ruin are made up. They march on with scorched feet over a pathway of fire, the ground trembling with earthquake, and the air hot with the breath of woe, and sulphureous with the fleet lightnings of God's wrath. Scorpions strike out at every step, and the "worm that never dies" lifts its awful crest, with horrid folds to crush the debauched. O, there is no peace in the life of a voluptuary. Solomon, answer. "None! none!"

But, my friends, if there is no complete satisfaction in worldly office, in worldly wealth, in worldly learning, in sinful indulgence—where is there any? Has God turned us out on a desert to die? Ah, no; look at this one that comes this morning—this fair one. Immortal garlands on her brow. The song of heaven bursting from her lips! "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." In Christ is peace. In Christ is pardon. In Christ is everlasting joy, and nowhere else.

## SALVE FOR THE SORE HEART.

"And His disciples went and told Jesus."—*Matt. xiv. 12.*

**A**N outrageous assassination has just taken place. To appease a revengeful woman, King Herod ordered the death of that noble, self-sacrificing Christian, John the Baptist. The group of disciples were thrown into grief and dismay. They felt themselves utterly defenceless. There was no authority to which they could appeal, and yet grief must always find expression. If there be no human ear to hear it, then the agonized soul will cry it aloud to the winds, and the woods, and the waters. But there was an ear that was willing to listen. There is a tender pathos, and at the same time a most admirable picture, in the words of my text: "They went and told Jesus." He could understand their grief, and He immediately soothed it. Our burdens are not more than half so heavy to carry if another shoulder is thrust under the other end of them. Here we find Christ, His brow shadowed with grief, standing amid the group of disciples, who, with tears, and violent gesticulations, and wringing of hands, and outcry of bereavement, are expressing their woe. Raphael, with his skilful brush putting upon the wall of a palace some scene of sacred story, gave not so skilful a stroke as when the plain hand of the evangelist writes: "They went and told Jesus."

The old Goths and Vandals came down from the North of Europe, and they upset the gardens, and they broke down the altars, and swept away everything that was good and beautiful. So there is ever and anon in the history of all the sons and daughters of our race an incursion of rough-handed troubles that come to plunder, and ransack, and put to the torch all that men highly prize. There is no cave so deeply cleft into the mountain as to allow us shelter, and the foot of fleetest courser cannot bear us beyond the quick

pursuit. The arrows they put to the string fly with unerring dart, until we fall pierced and stunned. It seems to me that there has never been so many trials in my congregation as now; so many bereaved hearts; so many borne down in worldly and spiritual trouble. But I feel that I bring to you a most appropriate message. I mean to bind up all your griefs into a bundle, and set them on fire with a spark from God's altar. The same prescription that cured the sorrow of the disciples will cure all your heart-aches. I have read that when Godfrey and his army marched out to capture Jerusalem, as they came over the hills, at the first flash of the pinnacles of that beautiful city, the army that had marched in silence lifted a shout that made the earth tremble. O, you soldiers of Jesus Christ, marching on toward heaven, I would that to-day, by some gleam of the palace of God's mercy and God's strength, you might be lifted into great rejoicing, and that before this service is ended you might raise one glad hosanna to the Lord.

In the first place, I commend the behaviour of these disciples to all those in this audience *who are sinful and unpardoned*. There comes a time in almost every man's history when he feels from some source that he has an erring nature. The thought may not have such heft as to fell him. It may be only like the flash in an evening cloud just after a very hot summer day. One man, to get rid of that impression, will go to prayer; another will stimulate himself by ardent spirits, and another man will dive deeper in secularities. But sometimes a man cannot get rid of these impressions. The fact is, when a man finds out that his eternity is poised upon a perfect uncertainty, and that the next moment his foot may slip, he must do something violent to make himself forget where he stands, or else fly for refuge. If there are any here who have resolved that they would rather die of this awful cancer of sin than to have the heavenly Surgeon cut it

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out, let me say, my dear brother, you mingle for yourself a bitter cup. You fly in the face of your everlasting interests. You crouch under a yoke and you bite the dust, when, this moment, you might rise up a crowned conqueror. Driven, and perplexed, and harassed as you have been by sin, go and tell Jesus. To relax the grip of death from your soul, and plant your unshackled feet upon the golden throne, Christ let the tortures of Calvary's mount transfix Him.

WITH THE BEAM OF HIS OWN CROSS

He will break down the door of your dungeon. From the thorns of His own crown He will pick enough gems to make your brow blaze with eternal victory. In every tear on His wet cheek; in every gash of His side; in every long, blackening mark of laceration from shoulder to shoulder; in the grave-shattering, heaven-storming death groan, I hear Him say: "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." "O," but you say, "instead of curing my wound you want to make another wound, namely, that of conviction." Have you never known a surgeon to come and find a chronic disease, and then with sharp caustic burn it all out? So the grace of God comes to the old sore of sin. It has long been rankling there, but by Divine grace it is burned out through these fires of conviction, "the flesh coming again as the flesh on a little child;" "where sin abounded, grace much more aboundeth." With the ten thousand unpardoned sins of your life, this morning go and tell Jesus. You will never get rid of your sins in any other way; and remember that the broad invitation which I extend to you will not always be extended. I was reading of King Alfred, who, in the days long before the modern time-pieces were invented, used to divide the day into three parts, eight hours each, and then had three wax candles. By the time the first candle had burned to the socket, eight hours had gone, and when the

second candle had burned to the socket, another eight hours had gone, and when all the three candles were gone out, then the day had passed. O, that some of us, instead of calculating our days, and nights, and years by any earthly time-piece, might calculate them by the numbers of opportunities and mercies which are burning down and burning out, never to be relighted, lest at last we be amid the foolish virgins who cry: "Our lamps have gone out."

Again: I commend the behaviour of the disciples *to all who are tempted*. I have heard men in mid-life say they had never been led into temptation. If you have not felt temptation it is because you have not tried to do right. A man hopped and handcuffed, as long as he lies quietly, does not test the power of the chain; but when he rises up, and with determination resolves to snap the handcuff or break the hopple, then he finds the power of the iron. And there are men who have been for ten, and twenty, and thirty years bound hand and foot of evil habit, who have never felt the power of the chain, because they have never tried to break it. It is very easy to go down with the stream and with the wind, lying on your oars; but you just turn around, and try to go against the wind and the tide, and you will find it is a very different matter. As long as we go down the current of our evil habits we seem to get along quite smoothly; but after awhile we turn around, and head the other way toward Christ, and pardon, and heaven; O, then how we have to lay to the oars! You all have your temptation. You have one kind, you another, you another, not one person escaping. It is all folly for you to say to some one: "I could not be tempted as you are." The lion thinks it is so strange that the fish should be caught with a hook. The fish thinks it is so strange that the lion should be caught with a trap. You see some man with a cold, phlegmatic temperament, and you say: "I suppose that man has not any temptation." Yes,

as much as you have. In his phlegmatic nature he has a temptation to indolence, and censoriousness, and over-eating and drinking; to sink down into a great latitude and longitude of fattiness; a temptation to ignore the great work of life; a temptation to lay down an obstacle in the way of all good enterprises. The temperament decides the style of temptation; but sanguine or lymphatic, you will have temptation. Satan has a grappling-hook just fitted for your soul. A man never lives beyond the reach of temptation. You say when a man gets to be seventy or eighty years of age he is safe from all satanic assault. You are very much mistaken. A man at eighty-five years of age has as many temptations as a man at twenty-five. They are only different styles of temptation. Ask the aged Christian whether he is never assaulted of the powers of darkness. If you think you have conquered the power of temptation

YOU ARE VERY MUCH MISTAKEN.

I was reading this morning of Pope Sixtus, who, when he was cardinal, pretended he was very weak and sickly, and if they elevated him to the office or chair of the Pope, he would only occupy it a little while, for he would soon be gone. He crawled upon his crutches to the chair, and once having attained it, he was strong again. He said: "It was well for me while I was looking for the keys of St. Peter that I should stoop; but now I have found them, why should I stoop any longer?" and he threw away his crutches and was well again. How illustrative of the power of temptation. You think it is a weak and crippled influence; but give it a chance and it will be a pope, it will be a tyrant in your soul, it will grind you to atoms. No man has finally and for ever overcome temptation until he has left the world. But what are you to do with these temptations? Tell everybody about them? Ah, what a silly man you would be! As well might



a commander in a fort send word to the enemy which gate of the castle is least barred, as for you to go and tell what all your frailties are, and what all your temptations are. The world will only caricature you, will only scoff at you. What then, must a man do? When the wave strikes him with terrific dash, shall we have nothing to hold on to? In this contest with "the world, the flesh, and the devil," shall a man have no help? no counsel? My text intimates something different. In those eyes that wept with the Bethany sisters, I see shining hope. In that voice which spoke until the grave broke and the widow of Nain had back her lost son, and the sea slept, and sorrow stupendous woke up in the arms of rapture, in that voice I hear the command and the promise: "Cast thy burden on the Lord, and He will sustain thee." Why should you carry your burdens any longer? O, you weary soul, Christ has been in all this conflict. He says: "My grace shall be sufficient for you. You shall not be tempted above that you are able to bear." Therefore with all your temptations, go, as these disciples did, and tell Jesus.

Again: I commend the behaviour of the disciples to all those *who are abused, and slandered, and persecuted*. When Herod put John to death, the disciples knew that their own heads were not safe. And do you know that every John has a Herod? There are persons in life who do not wish you very well. Your misfortunes are honeycombs to them. Through their teeth they hiss at you, misinterpret your motives, and would be glad to see you upset. No man gets through life without having a pommelling. Some slander comes after you, horned, and tusked, and hoofed, to gore and trample you; and what are you to do? I tell you plainly that all who serve Christ must suffer persecution. It is the worst sign in the world for you to be able to say: "I haven't an enemy in the world." A woe is pronounced in the Bible

against the one of whom everybody speaks well. If you are at peace with the whole world, and everybody likes you and approves your work, it is because you are an idler in the Lord's vineyard, and are not doing your duty. All those who have served Christ, however eminent, have been maltreated at some stage of their experience. You know it was so in the time of George Whitefield, when he stood and invited men into the kingdom of God. What did the learned Doctor Johnson say of him? He pronounced him a miserable mountebank. How was it when Robert Hall stood and spoke as no uninspired man ever did speak of the glories of heaven? and as he stood Sabbath after Sabbath preaching on these themes his face kindled with the glory. John Foster, a Christian man, said of this man: "Robert Hall is only acting, and the smile on his face is a reflection of his own vanity." John Wesley turned all England upside down with Christian reform, and yet the punsters were after him, and the meanest jokes in England were perpetrated about John Wesley. What is true of the pulpit is true of the pew; it is true of the street, it is true of the shop, and the store.

All who will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution. And I set it down as the very worst sign in all your Christian experience, if you are, any of you, at peace with all the world. The religion of Christ is war! It is a challenge to "the world, the flesh, and the devil," and if you will buckle on the whole armour of God, you will find a great host disputing your path between this and heaven. But what are you to do when you are assaulted, and slandered, and abused, as I suppose nearly all of you have been in your life? Go out and hunt up the slanderer? O, no, silly man. While you are explaining away a falsehood in one place, fifty people will just have heard of it in other places.

## I COUNSEL YOU TO ANOTHER COURSE.

While you are not to admit any opportunity of setting yourselves right, I want to tell you this morning of One who had the hardest things said about Him, whose sobriety was disputed, whose mission was scouted, whose companionship was denounced, who was pursued as a babe, and spit upon as a man, who was howled at after he was dead. I will have you go unto Him with your bruised soul, in some humble, child-like prayer, saying: "I see Thy wounds—wounds of head, wounds of feet, wounds of heart. Now, look at my wounds and see what I have suffered, and through what battles I am going, and by those wounds of Thine, sympathize with these." And He will sympathize, and He will help. Go and tell Jesus!

Again: I commend the behaviour of the disciples to all *who may have been bereaved*. How many in garb of mourning! If you could stand at this point where I am standing and look off upon this audience, how many signals of sorrow you would behold. God has His own way of taking apart a family. We must get out of the way for coming generations. We must get off the stage that others may come on, and for this reason there is a long procession reaching down all the time into the valley of shadows. This matter of emigration from time into eternity is so vast an enterprise, that we cannot understand it. Every hour we hear the clang of the sepulchral gate. The sod must be broken. The ground must be ploughed for resurrection harvest. Eternity must be peopled. The dust must press our eyelids. "It is appointed unto all men once to die." This emigration from time into eternity keeps three-fourths of the families of the earth in desolation. The air is rent with farewells, and the black-tasselled vehicles of death rumble through every street. The body of the child that was folded so closely to the mother's heart is put away in the cold and the darkness.

The laughter freezes to the girl's lip, and the rose scatters. The boy in the harvest field of Shunam says: "My head, my head," and they carry him home to die on the lap of his mother. Widowhood stands with tragedies of woe struck into the pallor of the cheek. Orphanage cries in vain for father and mother. O, the grave is cruel! With teeth of stone, it clutches for its prey. Between the closing gates of the sepulchre, our hearts are mangled and crushed. Is there any earthly solace? None. We come to the obsequies, we sit with the grief-stricken, we talk pathetically to their soul; but soon the obsequies have passed, the carriages have left us at the door, the friends who stayed for a few days are gone, and the heart sits in desolation listening for the little feet that will never again patter through the hall, or looking for the entrance of those who will never come again—sighing into the darkness. Ever and anon coming on some book or garment, or little shoe or picture, that arouses former association, almost killing the heart. Long days and nights of suffering that wear out the spirit, and expunge the bright lines of life, and give haggardness to the face, and draw the flesh tight down over the cheek-bone, and draw dark lines under the sunken eye, and the hand is tremulous, and the voice is husky and uncertain, and the grief is wearing, grinding, accumulating, exhausting. Now, what are such to do? Are they merely to look up into a brazen and unpitying heaven? Are they to walk a blasted field unfed of stream, unsheltered by overarching tree? Has God turned us out on the barren commons to die? O, no! no! no! He has not. He comes with sympathy, and kindness, and love. He understands all our grief. He sees the height, and the depth, and the length, and the breadth of it. He is the only one that can fully sympathize. Go and tell Jesus. Sometimes when we have trouble we go to our friends and we explain it, and they try to sympathize; but they do not

understand it. They cannot understand it. But Christ sees all over it, and all through it. He not only counts the tears and records the groans, but before the tears started, before the groans began, Christ saw the inmost hiding-place of your sorrow, and He takes it, and He weighs it, and He measures it, and He pities it with an all absorbing pity. Bone of our bone. Flesh of our flesh. Heart of our heart. Sorrow of our sorrow. As long as He remembers Lazarus's grave He will stand by you in the cemetery. As long as He remembers His own heart-break, He will stand by you in the laceration of your affections. When he forgets the foot-sore way, the sleepless nights, the weary body, the exhausted mind, the awful cross, the solemn grave, then He will forget you, but not until then.

Often when we were in trouble we sent for our friends; but they were far away, they could not get to us. We wrote to them: "Come right away," or telegraphed: "Take the next train." They came at last, yet were a great while in coming.

BUT CHRIST IS ALWAYS NEAR—

before you, behind you, within you. No mother ever threw her arms around her child with such warmth and ecstasy of affection as Christ has shown towards you. Close at hand—nearer than the staff upon which you lean, nearer than the cup you put to your lip, nearer than the handkerchief with which you wipe away your tears—I preach Him an ever present, all sympathizing, compassionate Jesus. How can you stay away one moment from Him with your griefs? Go now! Go and tell Jesus!

It is often that our friends have no power to relieve us. They would very much like to do it; but they cannot disentangle our finances, they cannot cure our sickness and raise our dead; but glory be to God that He to whom the disciples

went has all power in heaven and on earth, and at our call He will baffle our calamities, and, at just the right time, in the presence of an applauding earth and a resounding heaven, will raise our dead. He will do it. He is mightier than Herod. He is swifter than the storm. He is grander than the sea. He is vaster than eternity. And every sword of God's omnipotence will leap from its scabbard, and all the resources of infinity be exhausted, rather than that God's child shall not be delivered when he cries to Him for rescue. Suppose your child was in trouble: how much would you endure to get him out? You would go through any hardship. You would say: "I don't care what it will cost; I must get him out of that trouble." Do you think God is not so good a father as you? Seeing you are in trouble, and having all power, will He not stretch out His arm and deliver you? He will. He is mighty to save. He can level the mountain and divide the sea, and can extinguish the fire and save the soul. Not dim of eye, not weak of arm, not feeble of resources, but with all eternity and the universe at His feet. Go and tell Jesus. Will you? Ye whose cheeks are wet with the night-dew of the grave; ye who cannot look up; ye whose hearts are dried with the breath of a sirocco; in the name of the religion of Jesus Christ, which lifts every burden, and wipes away every tear, and delivers every captive, and lightens every darkness, I implore you now, *go and tell Jesus!*

I was reading of a little child who went with her father, a sea captain, to sea, and when the first storm came the little child was very much frightened, and in the night rushed out of the cabin and said: "Where is father? where is father?" Then they told her: "Father is on deck guiding the vessel and watching the storm." The little child immediately returned to her berth and said: "It's all right, for father's on deck." O, ye who are tossed and driven in this world, up

by the mountains and down by the valleys, and at your wits' end, I want you to know the Lord God is guiding the ship. Your Father is on deck. He will bring you through the darkness into the harbour. Trust in the Lord. Go and tell Jesus. Let me say that if you do not you will have no comfort here, and you will for ever be an outcast and a wanderer. Your life will be a failure. Your death will be a sorrow. Your eternity will be a disaster. But if you go to Him for pardon and sympathy, all is well.

But I am oppressed, when I look over this audience, at the prospect that some may not take this counsel, and go away unblessed. I cannot help asking what will be the destiny of these people? So I never care whether it comes into the text or not: I never leave my place on this platform without telling them that now is the time, and to some, perhaps, the last.

Xerxes looked off on his army. There were two million men—perhaps the finest army ever marshalled. Xerxes rode along the lines, reviewed them, came back, stood on some high point, looked off upon the two million men, and burst into tears. At that moment, when every one supposed he would be in the greatest exultation, he broke down in grief. They asked him why he wept. "Ah," he said: "I weep at the thought that so soon all this host will be gone." So I stand looking off upon this host of immortal men and women, and realize the fact, as perhaps no man can, unless he has been in a similar position, that soon the places which know you now will know you no more, and you will be gone—*whither?* **WHITHER?**





